

1918 - 2018 THE GREAT WAR REMEMBERED

HISTORY *of* WAR



**"FORMER ENEMIES
BECOME FRIENDS"**

North Africa veterans
reunite 75 years on

HOW THE WAR WAS WON

The bold tactics that led
Britain to victory in the
Hundred Days Offensive

**USA
VS
MEXICO**

How the fall of
Texas defined
nations

BATTLE OF WAGRAM

Napoleon's decisive
but costly triumph



SHERMAN'S MARCH TO THE SEA

Uncover the most brutal
campaign of the Civil War



BARBAROSSA: RARE PHOTOS

Unseen images of the
Nazis' war in the East



KING & COUNTRY'S

TET'68

VN001

BY NOVEMBER of 1967 half a million American troops were serving in Vietnam and more bombs had fallen over that country than had been dropped on Europe during all of WW2. General William Westmoreland, commander of American forces felt confident enough to proclaim, "the end begins to come into view..."

Elsewhere however other people had other opinions. In North Vietnam the leaders in Hanoi were planning a major military offensive that they believed would win the war with one mighty blow!

Their plan was to combine regular NVA (North Vietnamese Army) units and local VIET CONG militia to attack ALL important towns, cities and military bases across South Vietnam at the same time - On the first day of the Lunar New Year, called TET.

In the early hours of 31 January, 1968 they struck!

THE BATTLE OF HUE

The city of Hue in central Vietnam was once the country's imperial and cultural capital. In 1968, it was an important supply and logistics centre for U.S., ARVN (Army of the Republic of South Vietnam) and other Allied forces. It was also one of the primary targets of the joint NVA/VC offensive.

Within hours of launching the attack on Hue most of the city, save for two small military compounds, were firmly in enemy hands.

Nearby, local American and ARVN commanders soon began organizing

VN018

VN017



counter-attacks both to relieve their besieged comrades and to recapture the city itself. Little did they realize the size and volume of the opposing forces.

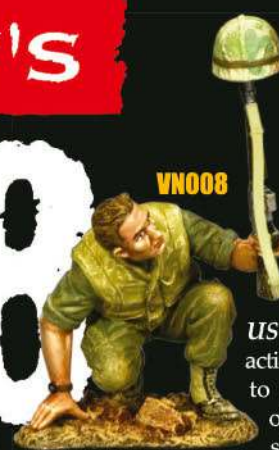
Among the first combat troops rushed forward to retake Hue were men of the United States Marine Corps. Over the next 24 days these marines would write one more brave and bloody chapter in Marine Corps history that stands proudly alongside Belleau Wood... Iwo Jima... and Korea's Chosin Reservoir.

KING & COUNTRY IN VIETNAM

This is K&C's second venture into the Vietnam War. Back in 1998, we produced soldiers and marines in action fighting in the jungles and countryside of South Vietnam. Today, we're moving into the rubble-strewn streets and shell-blasted houses of the city of Hue during the TET offensive to tell a different story.

Over the coming months (and beyond) KING & COUNTRY is releasing a large number of

VN008



US Marines in action as they battle to recapture the old Imperial city... street by street...

house by house.

In addition, a number of unique fighting vehicles that played an important role in the battle will also be available. As will the men and women of the NVA/VC forces... and the poor innocent civilians caught in the middle!

AUTHENTIC BATTLEFIELD REALITY

As you can see many of these first figures are based on actual combat photographs taken during the battle as well as documentary films that have appeared since 1968.

50 years on the war may have ended, Vietnam been united but the courage and sacrifice of those men who took part deserves to be remembered.

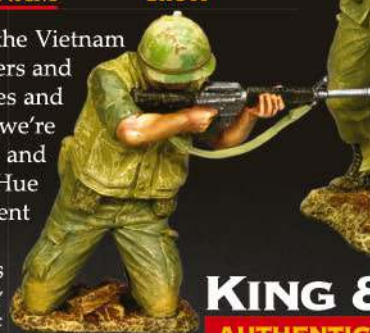
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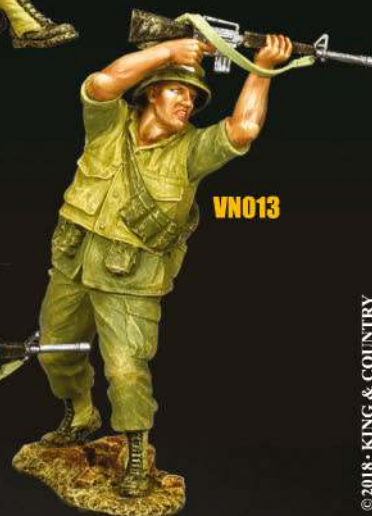
VN010



VN011



VN013



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Welcome

“A new crisis is now asserting itself... actions must succeed each other at brief intervals, so as to embarrass the enemy in the utilisation of his reserves”

– Ferdinand Foch, on the Hundred Days Offensive

One of the most tragic facts of World War I is that towards the final months leading up to the armistice and peace, the Western Front saw some of the bloodiest fighting of the conflict.

In the aftermath of the failed German Spring Offensive, the Allies were ready to launch the knockout blow. Applying the costly lessons learnt from previous disastrous campaigns, British and French armies utilised creeping barrages, backed up with swift infantry advances and support from nimble tanks.

In Part I of his two-part series on the Hundred Days Offensive, Professor William Philpott reveals

the generalship behind this campaign, and how its opening weeks set the stage for victory.



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Editor



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CONTRIBUTORS



TOM GARNER

This month Tom spoke with two veterans of the North Africa campaign, who in WWII faced each other from opposing sides (p.44). In our new Home Front section, he takes a look at some of the finest military museums to visit this summer (p.86).



DAVID SMITH

Sherman's March to the Sea was one of the most controversial campaigns of the American Civil War, which saw a strategy of terror unleashed on the Confederate heartlands. David reveals how the Union gamble paid off (p.72).



MICHAEL HASKE

The Whippet was a much faster vehicle than previous tanks, in theory enabling closer support with infantry, and consolidating occupied ground. Mike takes a look inside this innovative vehicle in the Operator's Handbook this issue (p.38).

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A British 60-pounder fires in support of advancing infantry in September 1918



Image: Alamy

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HOW THE WAR WAS WON

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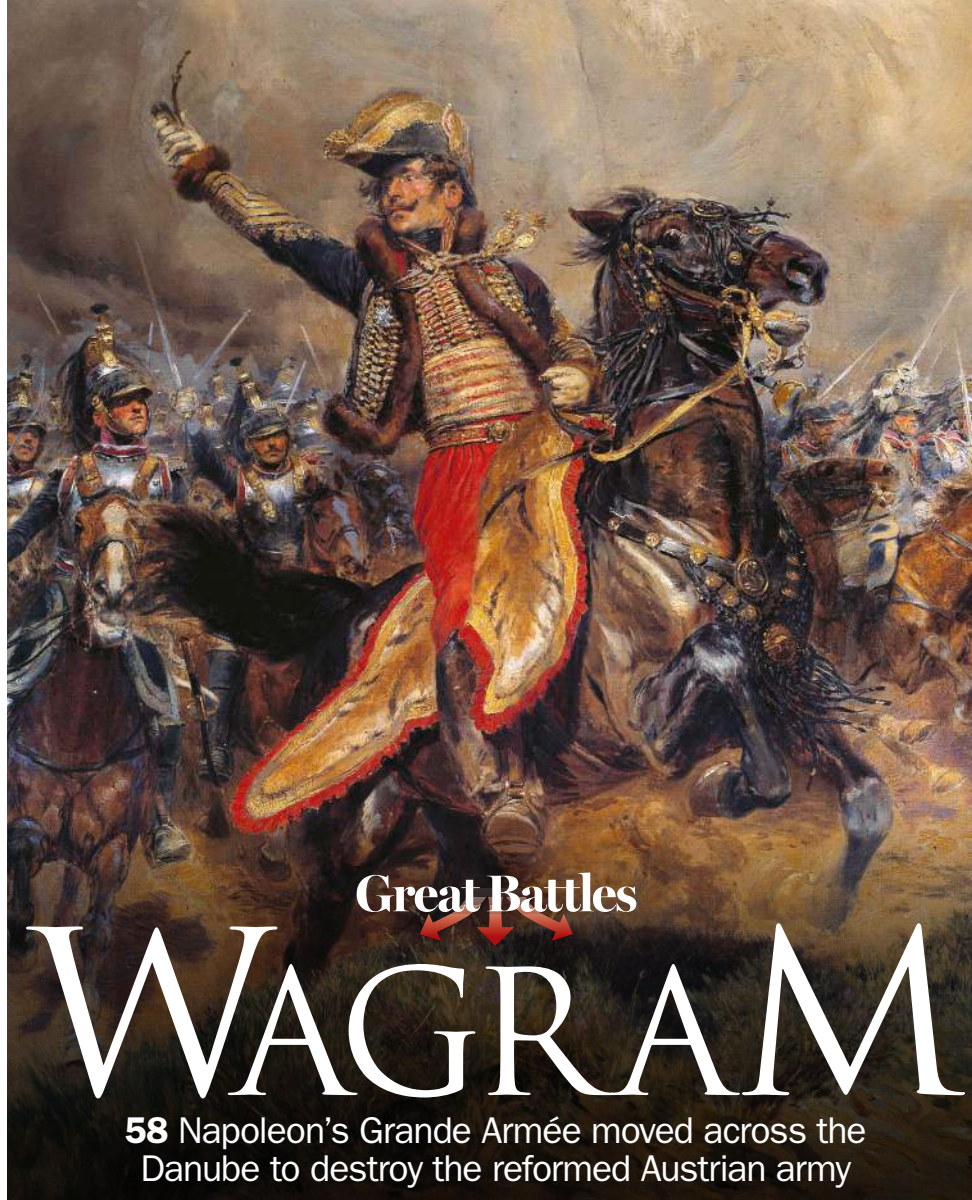
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THE MARCH TO THE SEA

72 Sherman launches his highly controversial campaign to "make Georgia howl"



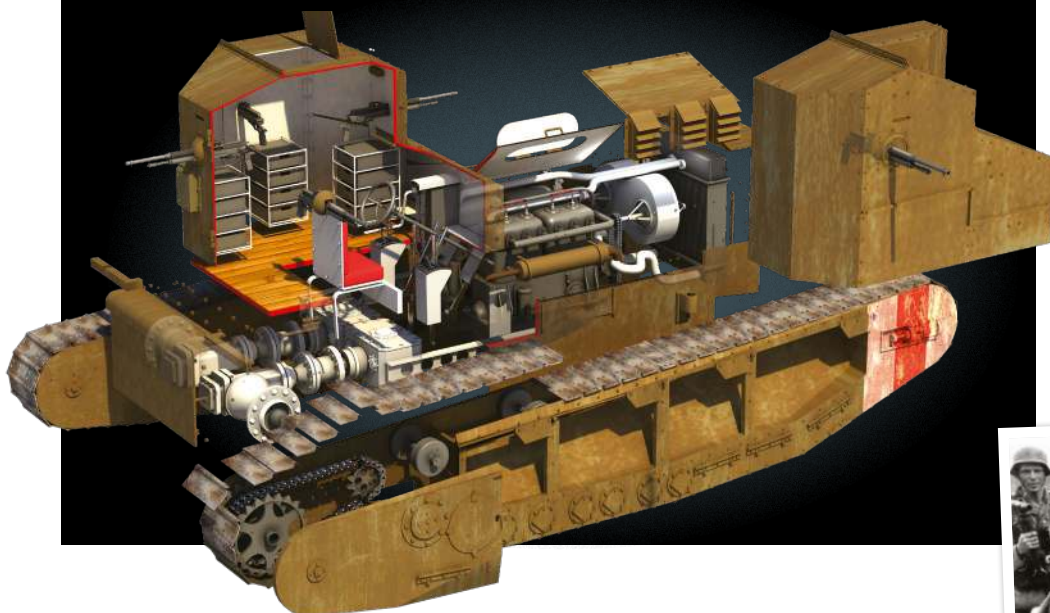
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In summer 1918 Foch launched the Allies' massive, sustained counter-offensive

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Napoleon attacks a revamped Austrian army under Archduke Charles

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Sherman's Union force moves into Georgia

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The Young Pretender's ornate shield

THIRD REICH IN PHOTOS
DEATH
STRUGGLE
—OF 1941—





WARⁱⁿ FOCUS **ON YOUR MASKS...**

Taken: June 1941

Children wearing gas masks carry out a practice evacuation of a school in Kingston, Greater London, after a canister of tear gas was discharged. Although gas ordnance was never used during raids on British cities, masks were carried at all times as a precaution.

38 million masks had been distributed to the public by September 1939.



WAR_{in} **FOCUS** **RECON READY**

Taken: February 1967

This is a portrait of members of a US Army Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) of the 173rd Airborne, as they pose, in camouflage, in War Zone C during Operation Junction City in the Vietnam War, in Tay Ninh Province, South Vietnam. Pictured, from left to right, are Manuel Moya, Roger Bumgardner, Bruce Baugh, Raymond Hill and Reed Cundiff.





WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

FLAMMENWERFER

Taken: c. November/December 1941

German troops operate a flamethrower somewhere on the Eastern Front, just months after the invasion of the Soviet Union had commenced. The Flammenwerfer 35 was upgraded to the 41 the same year, with slightly increased range and a lighter design. However, operators were still vulnerable to close-range rifle fire, with their larger silhouettes making tempting targets.









WAR_{in} **FOCUS** **A BIRTHDAY FLYPAST**

Taken: 10 July 2018

A trio of F-35B Lightning II aircraft of 617 Squadron take part in the RAF 100 parade and flypast over Buckingham Palace, during celebrations in July. A centenary parade and a flypast of up to 100 aircraft over the royal palace took place to mark the formation of the Royal Air Force, which became the first of its kind in the world.

TIMELINE OF THE... MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR

This controversial, nakedly expansionist conflict saw the United States forcibly acquire over half of Mexico's sovereign territory

SIEGE OF VERACRUZ

The Americans under Major General Winfield Scott besiege the vital Mexican port of Veracruz for 20 days. After the garrison surrenders, the way is clear for an American march on Mexico City.

25 April-9 May 1846

TEXAS CAMPAIGN

Inspired by the concept of 'Manifest Destiny', the USA expands westwards and annexes Texas. When negotiations to purchase New Mexico and California from Mexico fail, the United States launches an offensive. Mexican forces retreat out of Texas.

US President James K. Polk was keen to expand US territory, and declared war on Mexico in April 1846

CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA

When American immigrants revolt against Mexico they receive support from the US Army. Northern ports and cities are captured almost without bloodshed, and there is a week-long siege of Los Angeles. Mexico informally cedes California to the USA.

In June 1846 rebels declared the Californian Republic, symbolised by the bear flag

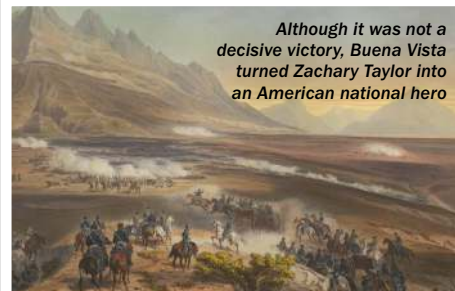


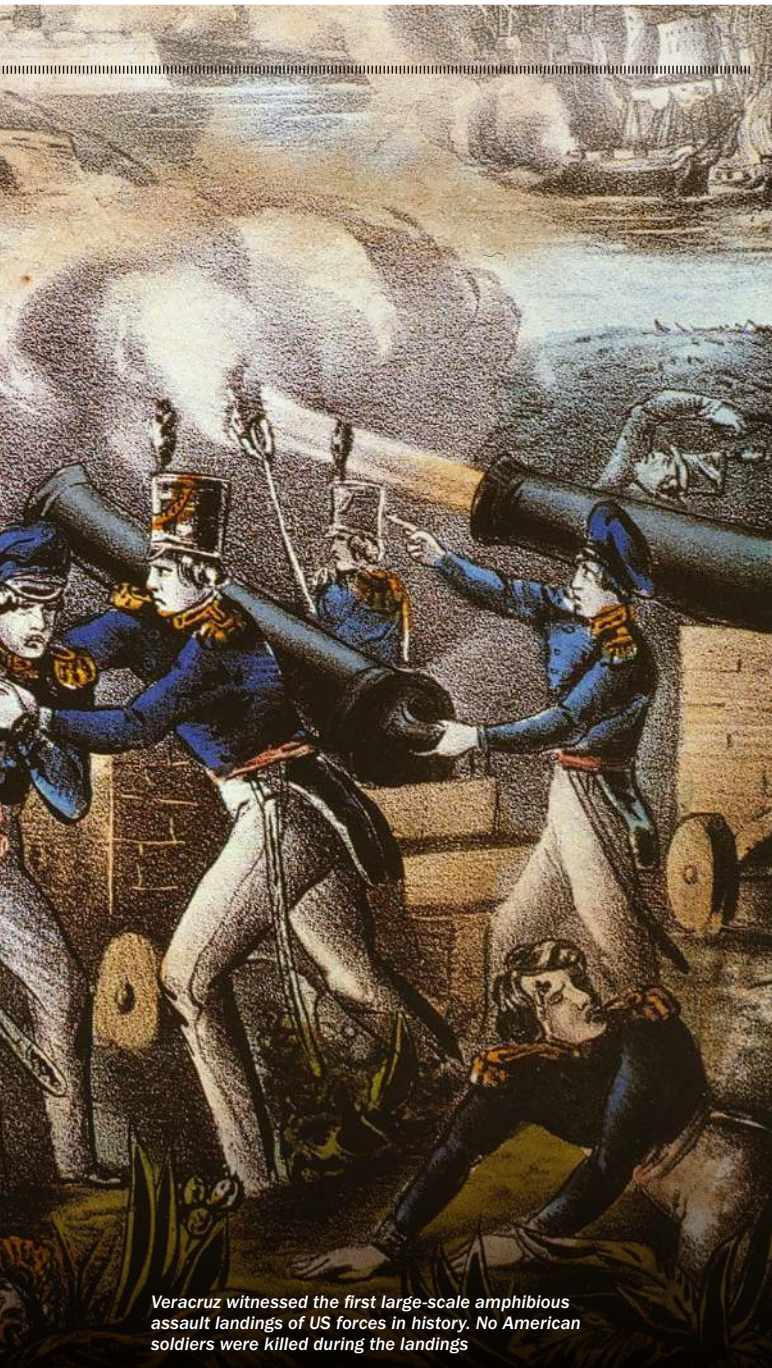
22-23 February 1847

BATTLE OF BUENA VISTA

An American army of 5,000 under Zachary Taylor fights 14,000-15,000 Mexican troops commanded by Antonio López de Santa Anna. During a dramatic battle, the Americans improbably force the Mexican army to retreat.

Although it was not a decisive victory, Buena Vista turned Zachary Taylor into an American national hero





Veracruz witnessed the first large-scale amphibious assault landings of US forces in history. No American soldiers were killed during the landings

BATTLE OF CHAPULTEPEC

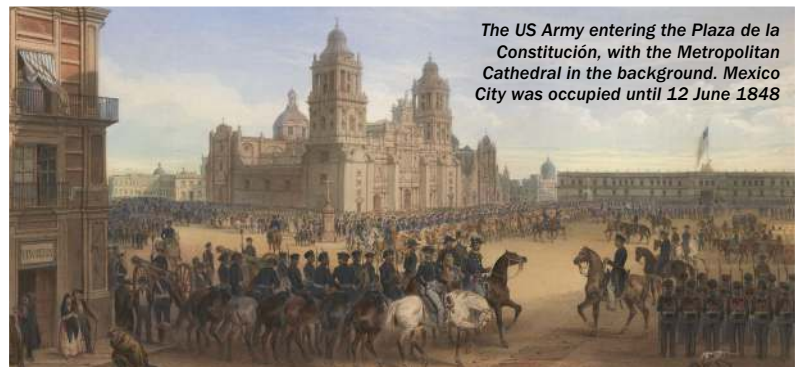
Chapultepec is a fortified castle on a rocky hill overlooking key causeways to Mexico City. It is the last obstacle to the Americans before they can attack the capital, and is garrisoned by 15,000 men. US forces bombard the fort before infantry launch a successful assault against its walls. The defenders flee, including Santa Anna.



90 per cent of US Marine officers were killed at Chapultepec. A scarlet stripe was later added to US Marine officers' dress trousers to commemorate them

BATTLE FOR MEXICO CITY

After Chapultepec, American soldiers attack the gateways of Mexico City and break through the walls despite fierce resistance. Santa Anna withdraws his army at night and Winfield Scott triumphantly enters the city.



The US Army entering the Plaza de la Constitución, with the Metropolitan Cathedral in the background. Mexico City was occupied until 12 June 1848

18 April 1847

12-13 September 1847

8-15 September 1847

2 February 1848

BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO

An outnumbered American army meets a Mexican force led by Santa Anna. A flanking manoeuvre suggested by Colonel Robert E. Lee leads to a US victory. Winfield Scott moves on to Puebla, Mexico's second city.

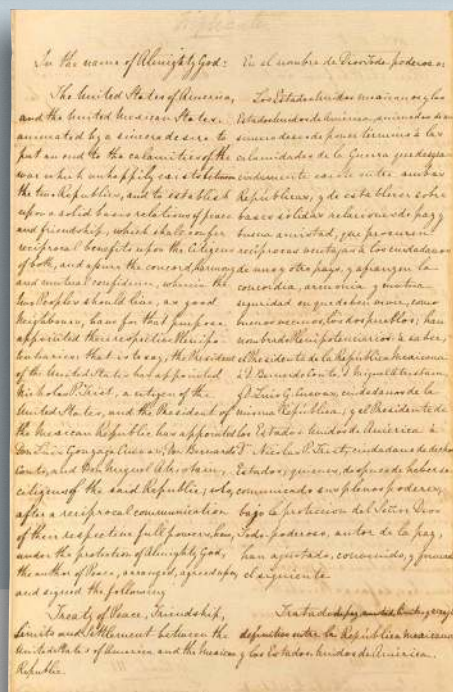


The Americans managed to outflank strong Mexican defensive positions at Cerro Gordo despite a thwarted ambush at the start of the battle

TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO

The war ends with the signing of a significant treaty. The Americans pay \$15 million to Mexico, but Mexico is forced to cede 55 per cent of its territory to the United States. This amounts to 1.36 million square kilometres (525,000 square miles) of land lost.

A section of the original treaty. Such is the bitter legacy of the war that Mexicans still refer to it as the 'War of the North American Invasion'



EXPANSIONS & CONQUESTS

The war was characterised by US advances into Mexican territory with a series of battles, sieges and amphibious landings

1 SIEGE OF FORT TEXAS

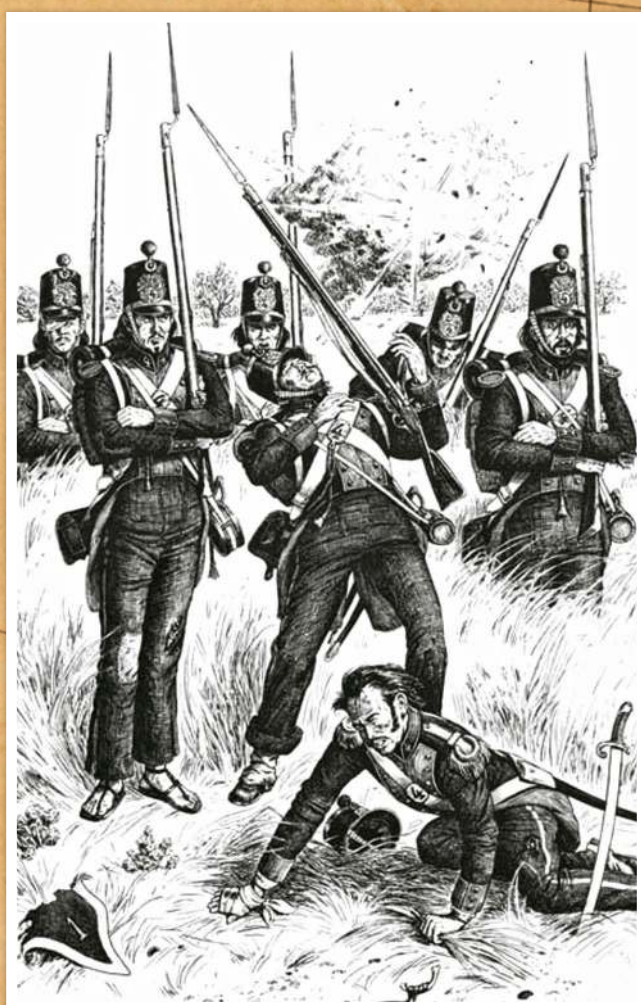
3-9 MAY 1846 BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS

This small engagement marks the beginning of hostilities between Mexico and the United States. Mexican artillery bombards the American fort for six days before the besiegers withdraw. There are remarkably few casualties, with only two soldiers killed on each side.

2 BATTLE OF PALO ALTO

8 MAY 1846 BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS

Palo Alto is the first major clash of the war. Mexican troops besiege Fort Brown in southeast Texas but US General Zachary Taylor engages them in battle. US artillery defeats the numerically superior Mexican force, which includes crack cavalry.



Left: Mexican infantrymen come under American artillery fire at Palo Alto

BATTLE OF MONTEREY

7 JULY 1846 MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

BATTLE OF NATIVIDAD

16 NOVEMBER 1846

SALINAS VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

SIEGE OF LOS ANGELES

22-30 SEPTEMBER 1846

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

BATTLE OF CAÑADA

24 JANUARY 1847 SANTA CRUZ, NEW MEXICO

BATTLE OF DOMINGUEZ RANCHO

8 OCTOBER 1846

DOMINGUEZ HILLS, CALIFORNIA

BATTLE OF SAN PASQUAL

6-7 DECEMBER 1846

SAN PASQUAL VALLEY, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

The Battle of San Pasqual is fought in the vicinity of San Diego and is an indecisive engagement, whose outcome is still debated

BATTLE OF THE SACRAMENTO RIVER

28 FEBRUARY 1847

SACRAMENTO RIVER PASS, CHIHUAHUA

3 BATTLE OF RIO SAN GABRIEL

8 JANUARY 1847 LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles is secured for the USA in this brief battle that only lasts for 90 minutes. American troops shout, "New Orleans!" during fighting, in commemoration of Andrew Jackson's famous victory exactly 32 years before. Rio San Gabriel is the decisive action of the California Campaign.

4 BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO

18 APRIL 1847 XALAPA, VERACRUZ, MEXICO

After the American landings at Veracruz, Winfield Scott's army marches inland and encounters an entrenched Mexican force near Cerro Gordo. Captain Robert E. Lee deploys a flanking manoeuvre that causes the Mexican army to flee with heavy casualties.

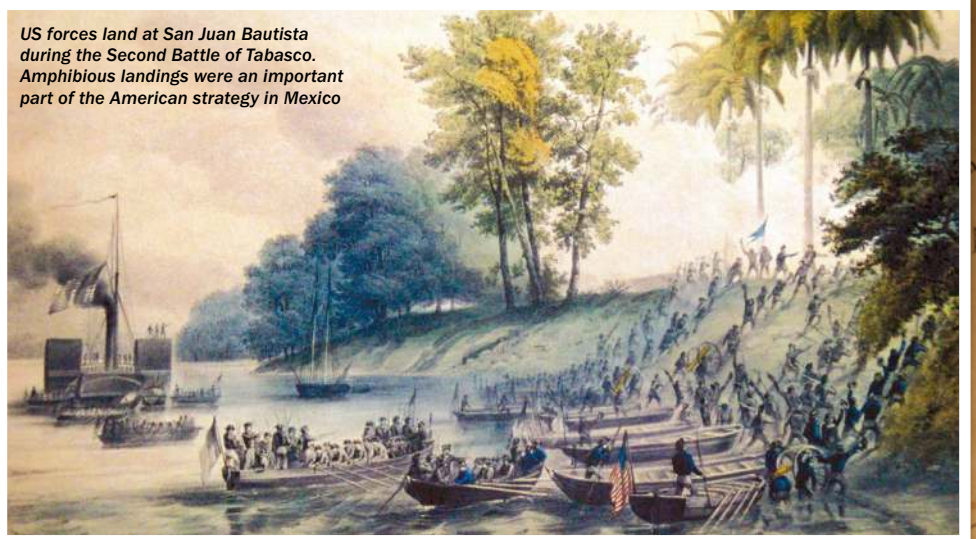
TAOS REVOLT
19 JANUARY-9 JULY 1847
NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

SIEGE OF PUEBLO DE TAOS
3-5 FEBRUARY 1847
PUEBLO DE TAOS, NEW MEXICO

LAS VEGAS AFFAIR
6 JULY 1847 LAS VEGAS, NEW MEXICO

CIENEGA AFFAIR
9 JULY 1847
CIENEGA CREEK, TAOS COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

US forces land at San Juan Bautista during the Second Battle of Tabasco. Amphibious landings were an important part of the American strategy in Mexico



5 SECOND BATTLE OF TABASCO
15-16 JUNE 1847 VILLAHERMOSA, TABASCO

Commodore Matthew C. Perry attacks Mexican river obstructions with the 'Mosquito Fleet', which is a collection of American steamboats, brigs and schooners. Shore parties also attack the defenders, and the last Mexican port on the Gulf coast is captured.

6 BATTLE OF CHAPULTEPEC
12-13 SEPTEMBER 1847 MEXICO CITY

US forces storm the strategically important Mexican fortress of Chapultepec during a dramatic battle. Its capture is a huge blow for Mexican morale and leaves the way open for the capture of Mexico City.



Above: The US Marines make a famous assault on the fortress, which is celebrated in the hymn 'Halls of Montezuma'

BATTLE OF RESACA DE LA PALMA
9 MAY 1846 BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS

BATTLE OF MONTERREY
21-24 SEPTEMBER 1846 MONTERREY, NUEVO LEÓN

BATTLE OF HUAMANTLA
9 OCTOBER 1847
HUAMANTLA, TLAXCALA

SIEGE OF PUEBLA
13 SEPTEMBER-12 OCTOBER 1847
PUEBLA, PUEBLA

7 BATTLE FOR MEXICO CITY
8-15 SEPTEMBER 1847 MEXICO CITY

A series of engagements are fought around the Mexican capital, including major battles at Molino del Rey and Chapultepec. The US Army under Winfield Scott is victorious and Mexico City is occupied by American troops.

8 SKIRMISH OF TODOS SANTOS
30 MARCH 1848 TODOS LOS SANTOS, BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR

A minor engagement on the Pacific Coast occurs between US volunteers and Mexican guerrillas. After a 30-minute fight the guerrillas are defeated. This armed resistance becomes the last action of the war.

BATTLE OF CONTRERAS
19-20 AUGUST 1847
MEXICO CITY

BATTLE OF CHURUBUSCO
20 AUGUST 1847
MEXICO CITY

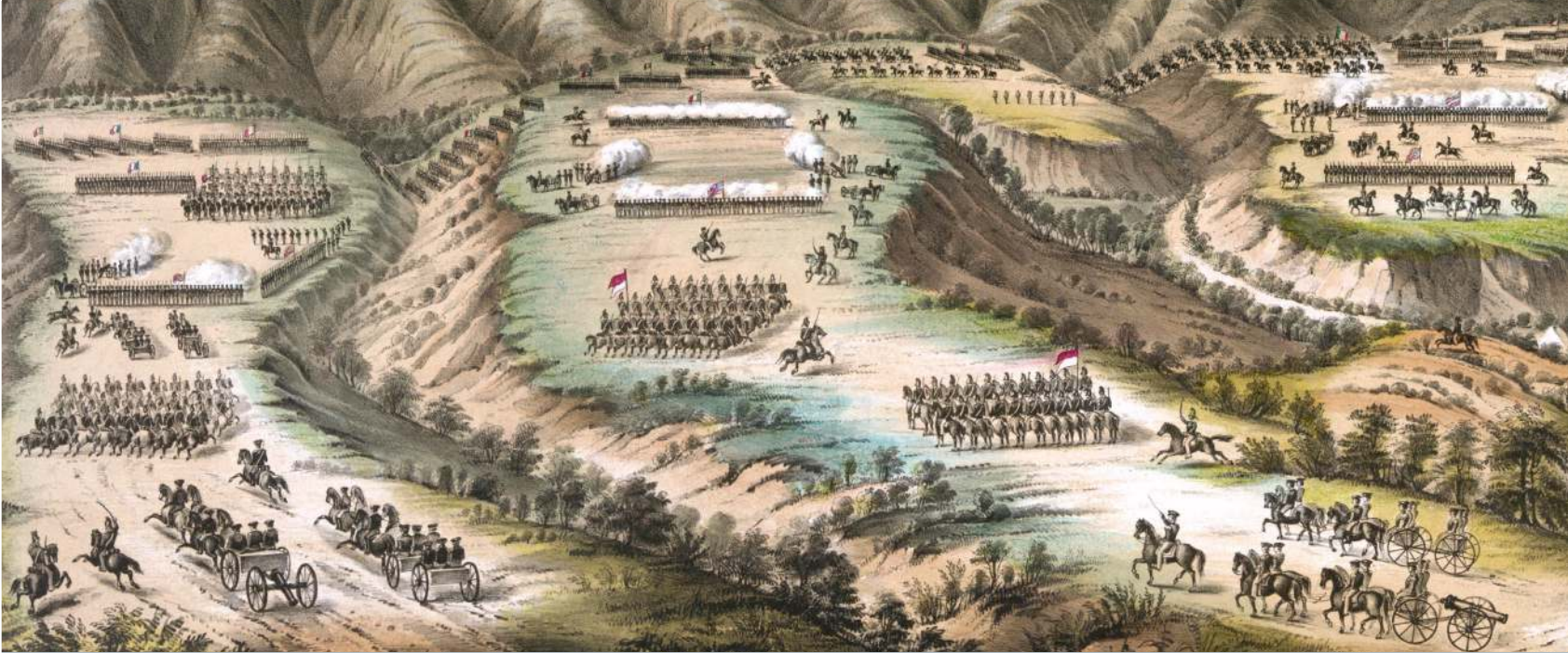
BATTLE OF MOLINO DEL REY
8 SEPTEMBER 1847
MEXICO CITY

Frontline

FAMOUS BATTLE

BUENA VISTA, 1847

This improbable US victory was fought between experienced commanders but inexperienced, numerically imbalanced soldiers



Buena Vista was arguably the most famous battle of the conflict. After war had been declared in 1846, US volunteer regiments were formed with keen but inexperienced recruits to fill the ranks of the American 'Army of Occupation' in northern Mexican territory. These regiments eventually numbered over 10,000 men under the command of Major General Zachary Taylor, but illness was rife at his base at Camargo.

By late 1846 Taylor's force had been depleted by disease and fighting at the Battle of Monterrey, while the US government decided to open a separate southern campaign. General Winfield Scott, who ordered Taylor to send most of his troops to prepare for the invasion of Veracruz, commanded this new front. The Army of Occupation was to assume a defensive position in northern Mexico, but Taylor refused to be a secondary player in the war. He moved his reduced force of approximately 5,000 men south

to Saltillo and ordered reinforcements from Brigadier General John E. Wool's Center Division. Such was Taylor's refusal to miss out on military glory that he refused to leave his advanced position when Scott ordered him to.

Meanwhile, the commander of the Mexican army, Antonio López de Santa Anna, moved to engage Taylor. He knew that Scott's landing at Veracruz was imminent and resolved to move first against the numerically weaker Americans. Santa Anna assembled a largely conscripted army of 14,000-15,000 men 400 kilometres (250 miles) south of Saltillo at San Luis Potosí, but they were in a weak condition. The Mexican soldiers were badly armed and

"SANTA ANNA ARRIVED THE FOLLOWING DAY AND DEMANDED TAYLOR'S SURRENDER"

poorly trained, and around 3,000 troops deserted on the march north in cold weather.

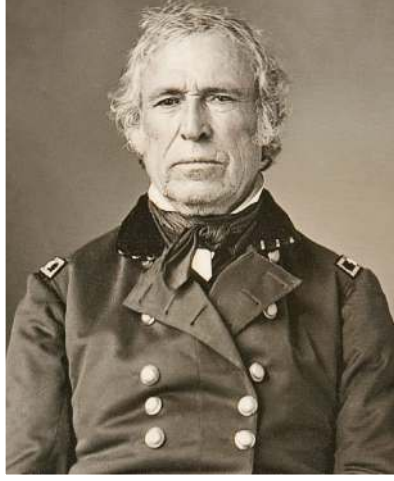
Santa Anna versus Taylor

When Taylor learned of Santa Anna's approach he moved his army to a pass between two mountain ranges at La Angostura, near Buena Vista, on 21 February 1847. This was a carefully chosen defensive position ten kilometres (six miles) south of Saltillo that Taylor believed would most assist his comparatively small force.

Santa Anna arrived the following day and demanded Taylor's surrender, which was refused. The Mexicans then began to skirmish with the Americans to judge their positions and numbers. One result of this preliminary fighting was that Taylor's communications line was cut by Mexican cavalry before the main battle started.

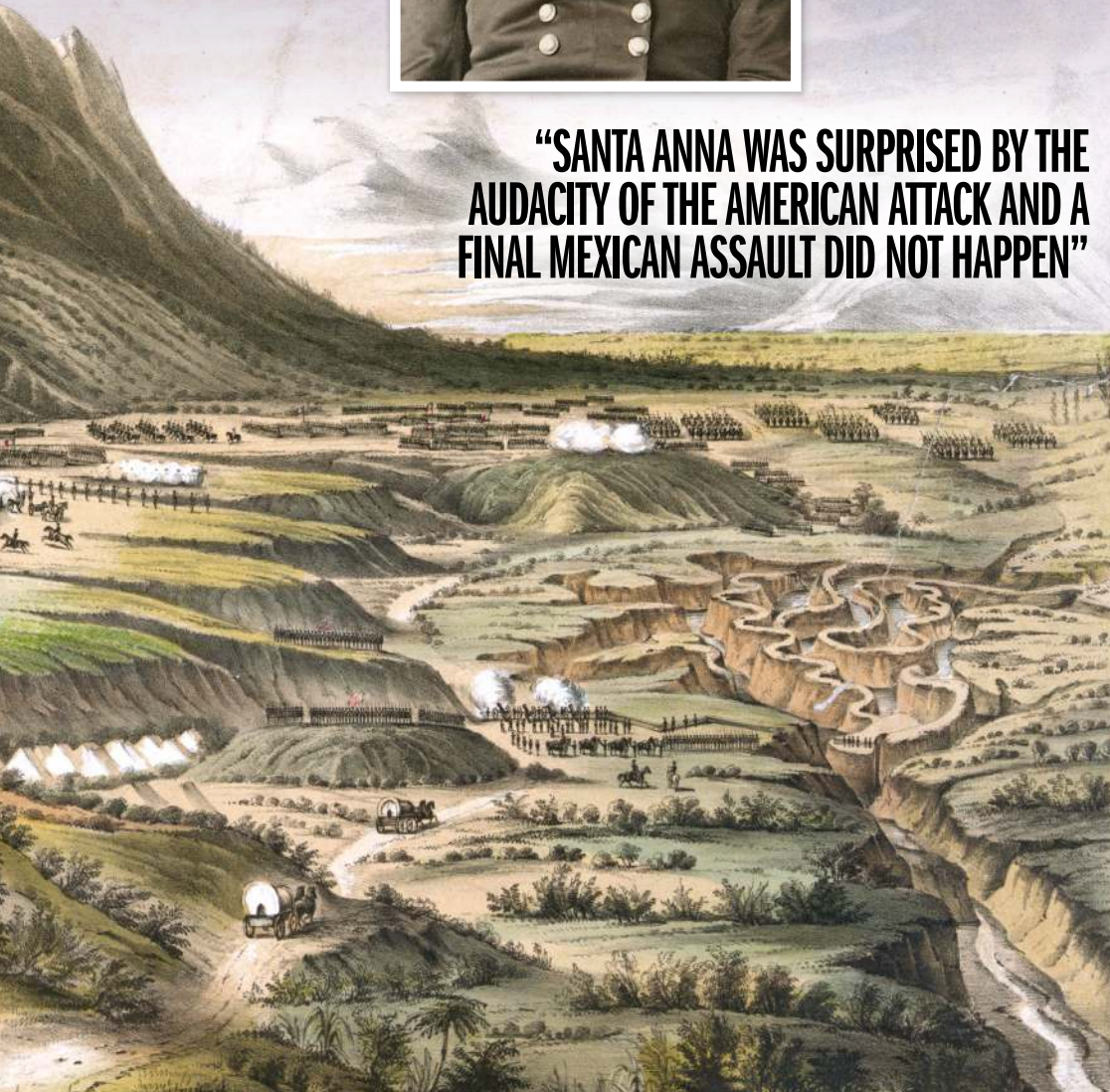
The Battle of Buena Vista officially started on 23 February when the Mexicans attacked the Americans' exposed left flank, which Taylor

An 1847 print depicts American forces at the battle, based on a sketch by Taylor's aide-de-camp, Major Joseph Eaton



Left: Like Dwight D. Eisenhower a century later, Zachary Taylor won a US presidential election based on his military achievements, despite having no political experience

“SANTA ANNA WAS SURPRISED BY THE AUDACITY OF THE AMERICAN ATTACK AND A FINAL MEXICAN ASSAULT DID NOT HAPPEN”



had failed to fortify. It was a mistake that came close to de-stabilising the American positions, and Mexican infantrymen almost broke through twice. Some US volunteer regiments retreated, but heavy artillery fire and reinforcements from Saltillo threw back the Mexican assault.

Santa Anna then ordered a mass attack on the American centre where Taylor had concentrated his artillery. This was the zenith of the battle and one that Taylor almost lost. Mexican infantry and cavalry almost succeeded in driving the Americans from the field through sheer weight of numbers and attacks, but they were eventually repulsed by the incessant US artillery fire.

The Mexican advance stalled and Taylor led a headstrong counterattack only for the Americans to run into enemy cannon fire. Although this was an unwise move for a numerically inferior army to make, Santa Anna was surprised by the audacity of the American attack and a final Mexican assault did not

happen. By this point it was nightfall and the fighting ended in the dark.

A burning retreat

During the night of 23-24 February, Taylor anticipated another attack the following day, but Santa Anna's supplies and men were exhausted. The Mexicans left their campsite in darkness but left their campfires burning as a ruse so that they would not be pursued. Taylor did not pursue Santa Anna, who retreated back to San Luis Potosí.

Despite Taylor being left in command of the field, Santa Anna still declared a Mexican victory. Estimates of casualties varied, but it is reckoned that the Mexicans lost 590-1,500 men compared to 260-700 Americans. Although Taylor did not follow up his victory at Buena Vista, his army still remained in control of northern Mexico, while Santa Anna arguably lost the greatest opportunity to reverse his army's battlefield fortunes.

FROM GENERAL TO PRESIDENT

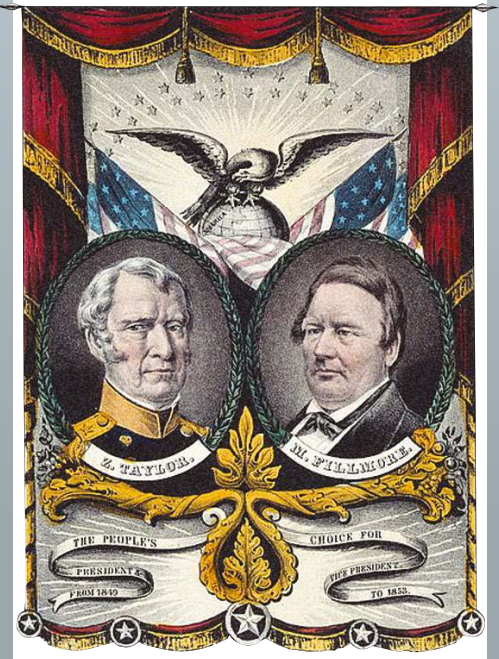
THE 1848 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SAW ZACHARY TAYLOR USE HIS VICTORY AT BUENA VISTA TO RISE TO THE HIGHEST OFFICE IN AMERICAN POLITICS

Although Taylor had arguably scraped his victory at Buena Vista he was hailed as a national hero in the American national press. 'Old Rough and Ready' political clubs, called after Taylor's nickname, almost immediately sprang up after the battle to support his candidacy for the presidency of the USA. Taylor had never even voted prior to 1848 and his political opinions were vague, which made him a vacuum for other peoples' beliefs. Many southerners believed he supported slavery, while the Whig Party believed he was a firm defender of the Union.

In reality, Taylor could be seen to support both views. He owned slaves but didn't support expanding slavery into the new lands seized from Mexico. At the same time he disagreed with Union states seceding because he had seen too many comrades die in battle fighting for the whole USA.

Taylor ultimately became the Whig candidate against President James K. Polk's Democratic nominee, Lewis Cass. The election was partly personal, as Taylor blamed Polk for allowing Winfield Scott to cut his army in half before Buena Vista. He ran for office largely based on his national appeal as a war hero and won the election on 7 November 1848. Despite his electoral victory, Taylor died 16 months into his term on 9 July 1850.

Below: A Whig banner for the presidential election of 1848. Zachary Taylor is depicted with his running mate Millard Fillmore, who became president in 1850 upon Taylor's death in office



PRESIDENTS & GENERALS

The Mexican-American War was a defining experience for battlefield commanders including several presidents of Mexico and the United States

WINFIELD SCOTT

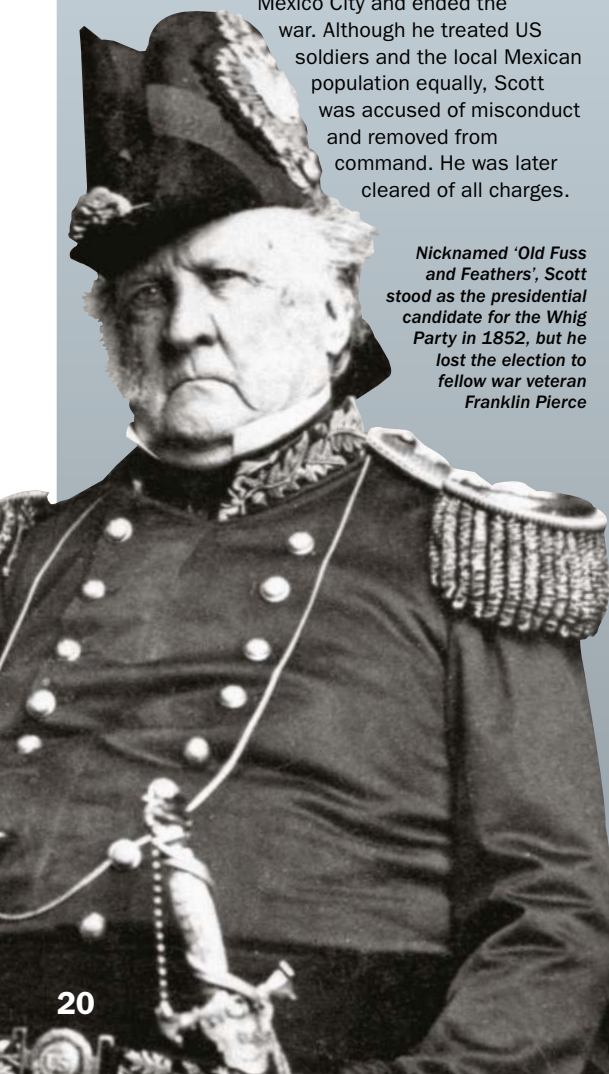
THE US ARMY COMMANDER WHO
MASTERMINDED THE VERACRUZ LANDINGS
AND FOUGHT HIS WAY TO MEXICO CITY
1786-1866 UNITED STATES

Scott was one of the most celebrated American commanders of the early 19th century. His first officer appointment was commanding light artillery in 1808, and he distinguished himself in combat many times during the War of 1812. By 1814 he was a brevet major general and commanded US forces during campaigns against Native Americans.

In 1841 Scott became the commanding general of the US Army and reached the pinnacle of his career in Mexico. He boldly suggested an amphibious landing at Veracruz, which was carried out unopposed in March 1847. Scott then pushed into the Mexican interior and won a series of battles, including Cerro Gordo, Churubusco and Molino del Rey.

After the Battle of Chapultepec, Scott occupied Mexico City and ended the war. Although he treated US soldiers and the local Mexican population equally, Scott was accused of misconduct and removed from command. He was later cleared of all charges.

Nicknamed 'Old Fuss and Feathers', Scott stood as the presidential candidate for the Whig Party in 1852, but he lost the election to fellow war veteran Franklin Pierce



ANTONIO LÓPEZ DE SANTA ANNA

THE MEXICAN PRESIDENT WHOSE MILITARY DEFEATS WERE DISASTROUS FOR HIS COUNTRY
1794-1876 MEXICO

Santa Anna was the dominant figure in the Mexican military and political life for a large part of the 19th century. Born into a minor but respectable Spanish colonial family, Santa Anna first gained military experience as a junior officer in the Spanish army and even fought against Mexican independence, before he switched sides in the early 1820s.

He then rose in prominence within Mexico and became president for the first time in 1833. Santa Anna famously led Mexican forces against rebellious American settlers in Texas and won the Battle of the Alamo. His subsequent defeat at the Battle of San Jacinto meant that Mexico had to grant Texas de facto independence. This would not be the last time that Santa Anna lost Mexican territory.

Between 1833-55 Mexico went through 36 changes of president. Santa Anna himself directly ruled 11 times as president, and despite his defeats during the Texas Revolution he was renowned for his personal heroism in battle. In 1845 he was exiled, but returned to Mexico as commander in chief of the armed forces in 1846.

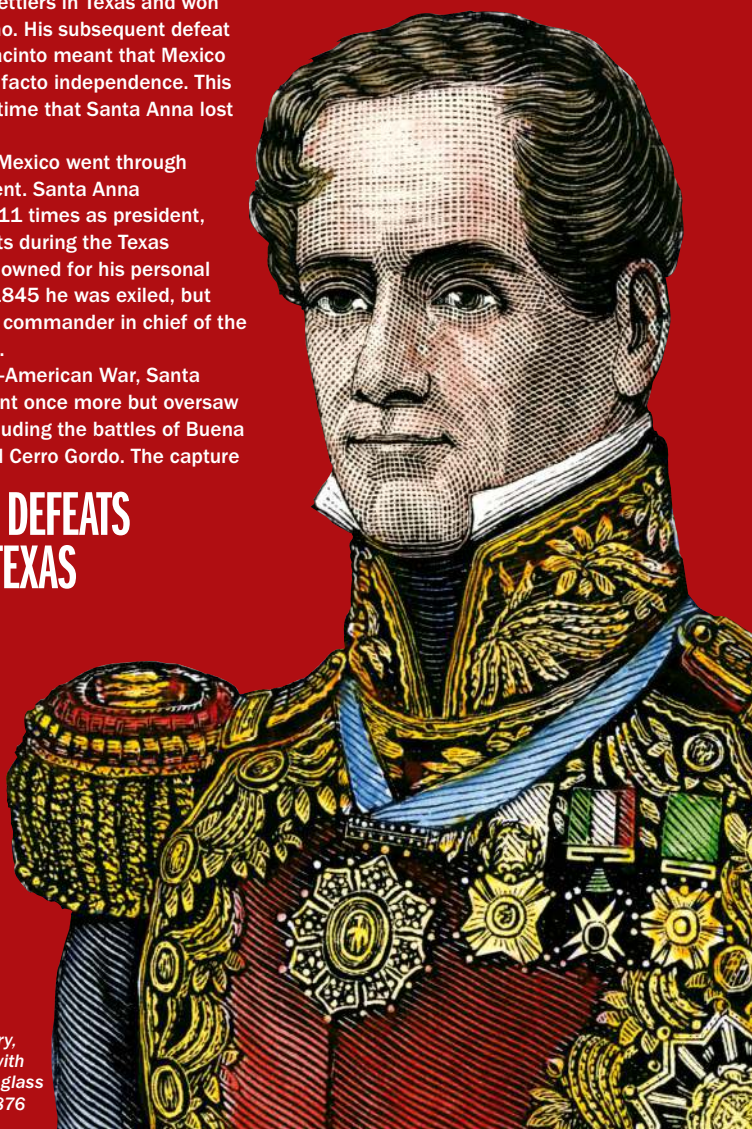
During the Mexican-American War, Santa Anna became president once more but oversaw continual defeats, including the battles of Buena Vista, Churubusco and Cerro Gordo. The capture

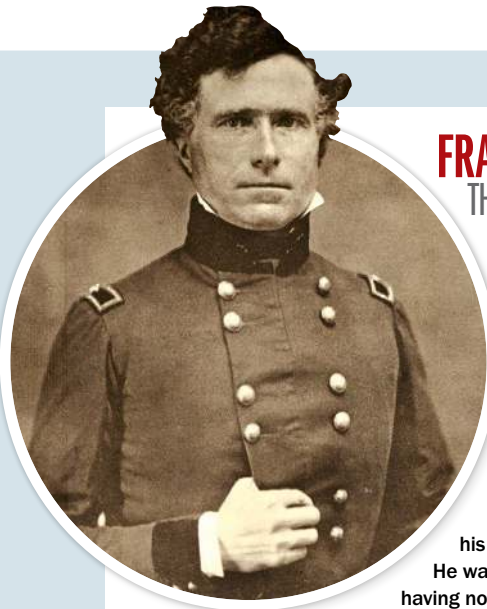
of Mexico City by American forces was the nadir of his military career and he voluntarily went into exile while a new government negotiated peace.

By the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico was forced to relinquish over half of its territory to the United States. The blame for this humiliating national disaster was squarely aimed at Santa Anna. He nevertheless remained the most powerful figure in Mexico until 1855, when he was removed as president for the last time.

**"DESPITE HIS DEFEATS
DURING THE TEXAS
REVOLUTION
HE WAS
RENOWNED
FOR HIS
PERSONAL
HEROISM IN
BATTLE"**

Despite his detrimental impact on Mexican history, Santa Anna was buried with full military honours in a glass coffin when he died in 1876





FRANKLIN PIERCE

THE FUTURE US PRESIDENT FOUGHT IN THE WAR TO INCREASE HIS ELECTORAL CHANCES OF HIGH OFFICE
1804-69 UNITED STATES

Born in New Hampshire, Pierce represented his state as a congressman and senator until 1842. By 1845 he was a successful attorney but he remained politically active and saw an opportunity to re-establish his old career when war broke out in 1846.

Pierce enlisted as a private but appealed to his ally President James K. Polk for a commission. He was duly appointed as a brigadier general, despite having no military experience.

Pierce's forces joined the army of his superior officer Winfield Scott. At the Battle of Contreras, Pierce's horse stumbled and crushed his leg. He passed out from the pain and his men began to break ranks. Although the battle ended in an American victory Pierce was nicknamed 'Fainting Frank' by some of his soldiers.

Nevertheless, Pierce's reputation was enhanced when his friend Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote a complimentary biography called *The Life Of Franklin Pierce*. His military exploits increased his popularity, and he eventually became the 14th president of the United States in 1853.

Pierce's opponent in the 1852 presidential election was his former superior officer Winfield Scott. Pierce won the election despite Scott's far greater military reputation

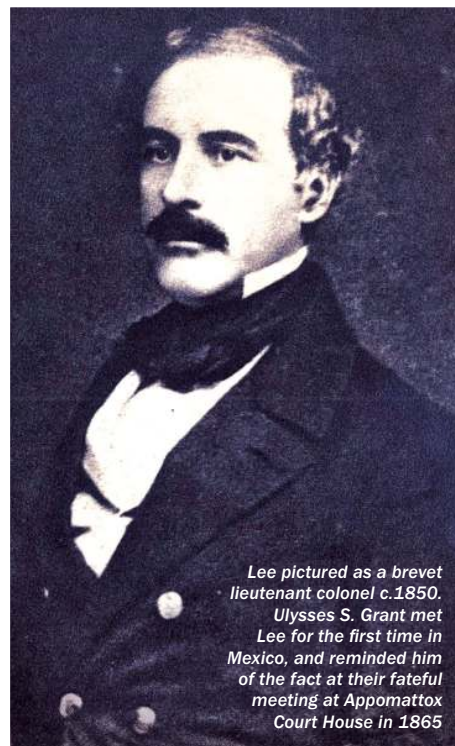
ROBERT E. LEE

THE FUTURE CONFEDERATE COMMANDER WHOSE TALENTS CONTRIBUTED TO TWO AMERICAN VICTORIES IN MEXICO 1807-70 UNITED STATES

As commander of the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War, Lee won many famous battles against superior Union armies. This very able soldier first proved his ability fighting for the USA in Mexico, and his record there was highly distinguished.

Lee graduated second in his class at West Point in 1829 and entered Mexico in October 1846 as a staff engineer. He was greatly trusted by Winfield Scott, who appointed him as his chief engineer.

Lee displayed great initiative on campaign and discovered a route that could outflank the Mexicans at the Battle of Cerro Gordo. This discovery resulted in a US victory, and Lee performed a similar feat through a dangerous lava bed at Churubusco. He was also present at the Battle of Chapultepec, where he was wounded, and ended the war as a highly respected brevet lieutenant colonel. Like Ulysses S. Grant, Lee's time in Mexico was an important experience in developing his leadership and combat skills.



Lee pictured as a brevet lieutenant colonel c.1850. Ulysses S. Grant met Lee for the first time in Mexico, and reminded him of the fact at their fateful meeting at Appomattox Court House in 1865

"THIS VERY ABLE SOLDIER FIRST PROVED HIS ABILITY FIGHTING FOR THE USA IN MEXICO AND HIS RECORD THERE WAS HIGHLY DISTINGUISHED"

ULYSSES S. GRANT

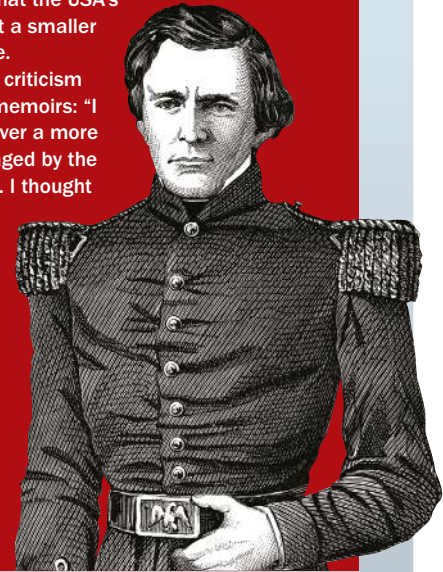
THE FUTURE PRESIDENT AND UNION COMMANDER WHO RECEIVED HIS BAPTISM OF FIRE IN MEXICO
1822-85 UNITED STATES

Grant is one of the United States' greatest commanders. His successful campaigns during the American Civil War sealed victory for the Union, and he went on to become the 18th president of the United States. Nevertheless, it was his early experiences during the Mexican-American War that forged his military and moral beliefs.

Graduating from West Point in 1843, Grant entered the war as a lieutenant and was assigned as a quartermaster. He bravely distinguished himself in several battles, including Resaca de la Palma, Monterrey, Palo Alto and Veracruz. Grant was brevetted for his courage several times but grew increasingly convinced that the USA's expansionist war against a smaller country was unjustifiable.

Grant wrote about his criticism many years later in his memoirs: "I do not think there was ever a more wicked war than that waged by the United States on Mexico. I thought so at the time, only I had not moral courage enough to resign. I am always ashamed of my country when I think of that invasion."

Second Lieutenant Grant in full dress uniform in 1843. By the end of the war Grant had received brevets (temporary promotions) to both first lieutenant and captain



PEDRO DE AMPUDIA

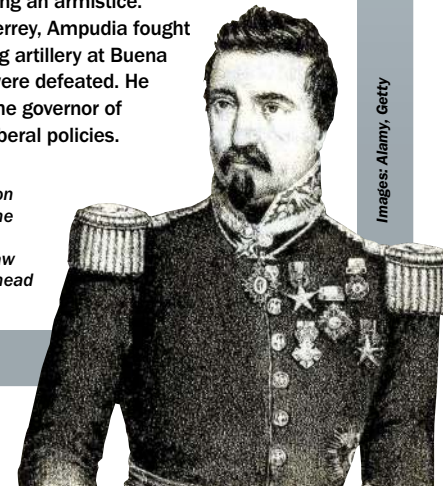
THE MEXICAN COMMANDER WHO PUT UP A SPIRITED DEFENCE AGAINST ZACHARY TAYLOR AT MONTERREY
1805-68 MEXICO

Like Santa Anna, the Cuban-born Ampudia first gained combat experience fighting for the Spanish army during the final part of the Mexican War of Independence. He switched sides in 1821, but unlike many of his contemporaries he was not politically active, and focused on his military career.

Ampudia fought the Texans many times, including at the Alamo and San Jacinto. He personally defeated them at Ciudad Mier in 1842, but the US Army was a different proposition. Ampudia became the commander of the Mexican Army of the North after heavily criticising his predecessor following the Battle of Palo Alto. His main engagement was a determined defence of Monterrey against Zachary Taylor, but he was forced into agreeing an armistice.

After evacuating Monterrey, Ampudia fought Taylor again, commanding artillery at Buena Vista, but the Mexicans were defeated. He would go on to become the governor of Yucatán and supported liberal policies.

Ampudia earned a reputation for brutality in 1844 when he captured a rebelling former governor of Tabasco, oversaw his execution and fried his head in oil for public display



Frontline

A "WICKED" WAR

The USA's war against Mexico was the product of 'Manifest Destiny' but it received heavy domestic criticism and ultimately contributed to the outbreak of civil war

**"NATIONS, LIKE INDIVIDUALS,
ARE PUNISHED FOR THEIR
TRANSGRESSIONS. WE GOT
OUR PUNISHMENT IN THE MOST
SANGUINARY AND EXPENSIVE
WAR OF MODERN TIMES"**

— Ulysses S. Grant



"I WOULD CALL ON AMERICANS TO HELP SAVE THE COUNTRY FROM INFAMY AND RUIN. TEACH YOUR RULERS THAT YOU ARE AMERICANS, NOT SLAVES, CHRISTIANS, NOT HEATHEN; MEN, NOT MURDERERS, TO KILL FOR HIRE!"

– Minister Theodore Parker

When the United States annexed Texas in 1845, Mexico vigorously opposed the move because it considered the rebellious state to be part of its territory. The US government initially sent an envoy to repair relations and offered millions of dollars to purchase California and New Mexico.

The Mexican government refused to cede any more territory, but the USA interpreted this as a hostile action. Once President James K. Polk sent troops into the disputed Texan border area, hostilities increased and war between the two nations became inevitable.

The reason for this inevitability was the rise of the concept of 'Manifest Destiny'. This was the increasingly influential belief that white Americans were, in a religious and racial sense, divinely ordained to settle the entire continent of North America. Although it was an old idea, the term was first coined by a newspaper editor in 1845 and inspired a variety of measures designed to remove or destroy native populations. This included any ethnic group that was considered to be 'un-American', such as Native Americans and Mexicans.

Manifest Destiny was a convenient ideology for a rapidly developing country that regarded land as a representation of wealth and freedom. Polk, who was a slave owner and cotton planter, won the 1844 US presidential election by favouring the expansionist issue, and regarded his victory as a mandate to increase US territory. Nevertheless, 'Polk's War' was heavily criticised.

Political and religious opposition

Support for the conflict was initially strong when over 200,000 men volunteered to serve in the US forces. Despite the surge in patriotism, Whig politicians became concerned at the introduction of executive powers and patronages by the governing Democratic Party. Polk came under particular scrutiny for his determination to acquire additional territory at Mexico's expense, and the conflict threw open divisions between northern and southern politicians. The former Whig secretary of state, Henry Clay, set the tone by stating, "This is no war of defence, but one of unnecessary offence and aggression."

Polk was a southerner, and northern 'Conscience Whig' and Democrat politicians condemned the war as an immoral project to extend slavery in the south. Critics of the administration included a young Whig congressman called Abraham Lincoln, and by the autumn of 1847 the Whigs had won a majority in the House of Representatives.

Opposition to the war was also religious, despite the theological foundations of Manifest Destiny. In New England, religious leaders denounced the war from the start. One of the most passionate opponents was Theodore Parker, the minister of the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society in Boston.

Parker was an abolitionist and accused Polk's government of being an instrument of "Slave Power", and declared in a speech, "In regard to this present war, we can refuse to take any part in it... I would call on Americans to help save the country from infamy and ruin.

Teach your rulers that you are Americans, not slaves, Christians, not heathen; men, not murderers, to kill for hire!"

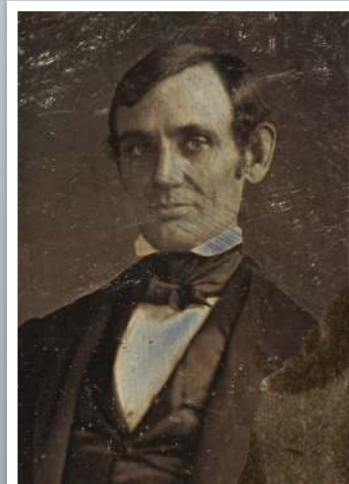
Religious opposition was based on the immorality of slavery, but sympathy for Mexico itself was noticeably lacking. Ironically, the perceived dominance of 'Anglo-Saxon America' united both opponents and advocates of the war, and Mexican people were commonly disparaged. Even Parker viewed them as "a wretched people, wretched in their origin, history and character". Mexicans, in his view, would, "melt away as the Indians before the white man", and his ultimate vision of the USA was grounded in an ugly racial superiority that is repugnant today.

The road to civil war

In this context, the war, despite making the USA a continental power, also more firmly entrenched the issues of race and slavery in the United States. The arguments between free and slave states became increasingly bitter for 13 years after 1848, until the American Civil War eventually broke out.

Ulysses S. Grant, who fought in Mexico and believed it was a "wicked" war, saw a clear parallel between the two conflicts: "The Southern rebellion was largely the outgrowth of the Mexican war. Nations, like individuals, are punished for their transgressions. We got our punishment in the most sanguinary and expensive war of modern times."

Ultimately, the last word on the USA's expansionist folly should be left to the Mexicans, who suffered thousands of casualties during their greatest national humiliation. Mexico lost half of its territory and its capital was occupied, but its people somehow knew that the USA would eventually be punished for its success. A contemporary Mexican sentiment was eerily prescient: "The United States may triumph – but its prize, like that of the vulture, will be in a lake of blood."



An 1846 photograph of Abraham Lincoln as a young congressman in his late 30s.

Lincoln criticised the war and questioned its constitutionality, although this proved unpopular with his Illinois constituents

Former secretary of state Henry Clay spoke for a minority of US politicians when he called the war "one of unnecessary offence and aggression"

Images: Getty

'Columbia' leads 'civilisation' westwards with American settlers and technology. This symbolic interpretation of 'Manifest Destiny' was the ideological reasoning behind the USA's war with Mexico

INNOVATIONS & WEAPONS

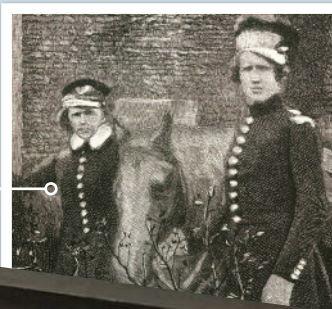
The conflict in Mexico was relatively conventional, but it also saw the introduction of groundbreaking technologies that changed modern warfare

The 1840s was an interesting crossroads in military technology. Although both the US and Mexican armies were still dominated by Napoleonic tactics and fashions, the technological impact of the Industrial Revolution was becoming apparent in the United States.

Mexico had no armoury and relied on antiquated European weapons, but the USA was making leaps forward in weapons, communications, transportation and even the new medium of photography.

THE YOUNG GRANT

This engraving of a lost daguerreotype reputedly shows Lieutenant Ulysses S. Grant (left) with fellow officer Alexander Hays. Hays was later killed fighting for the Union as a brigadier general at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864.



“ANONYMOUS PHOTOGRAPHERS FOLLOWED AMERICAN TROOPS ON CAMPAIGN AND REVOLUTIONISED THE DOCUMENTATION OF WAR”

WAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Contrary to popular belief, the Crimean War was not the first conflict to be photographed. The Mexican-American War was the first to be captured on camera using daguerreotypes, which were polished sheets of silver-plated copper. Anonymous photographers followed American troops on campaign and revolutionised the documentation of war.

Right: Daguerreotype plates were inserted into wooden camera boxes such as this French example from 1839. Mexican-American War photographs were privately produced and not publicly displayed



ON THE MARCH

A battalion of the Virginia Regiment passes through Saltillo in Mexico c.1847-48. Saltillo was located just north of Buena Vista, where Zachary Taylor won his famous victory.



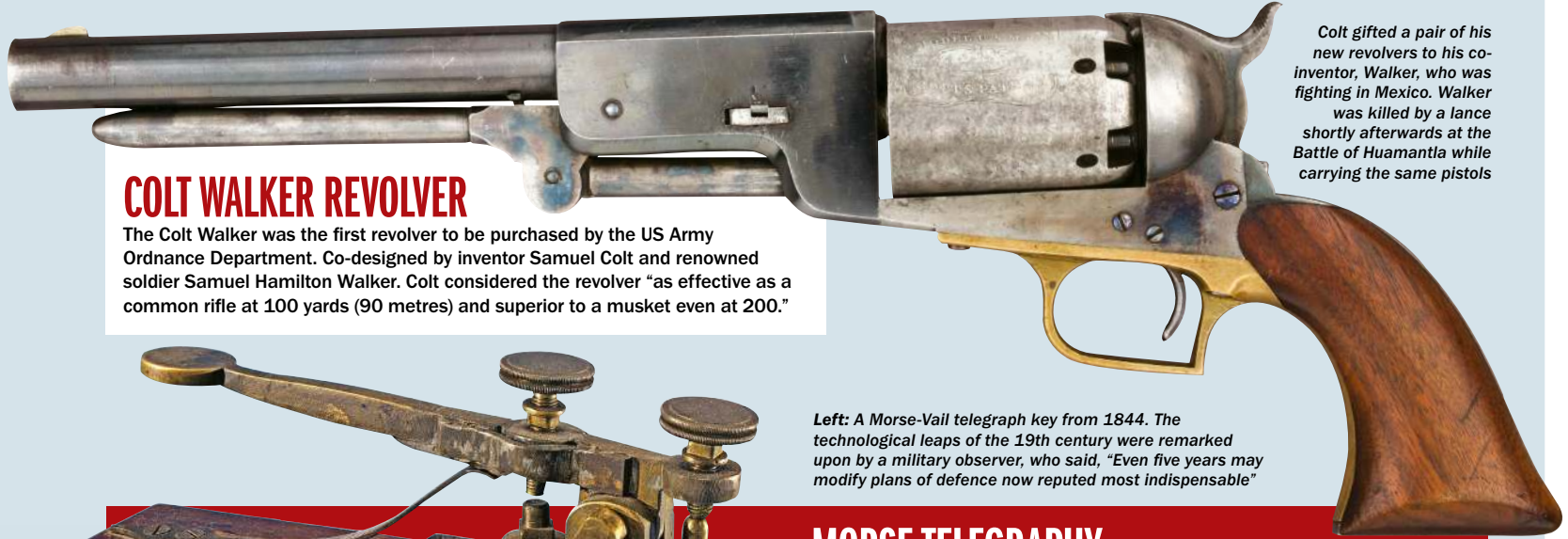
US ENCAMPMENT

Mounted troops of the Virginia Regiment are pictured at their camp at Calle Real, Mexico. Horse-drawn artillery is clearly visible in the foreground.



A GENERAL PASSES BY

Brigadier General John E. Wool rides through Saltillo with his staff. Wool was a prominent US commander during the conflict and also fought in the War of 1812 and the American Civil War.



Colt gifted a pair of his new revolvers to his co-inventor, Walker, who was fighting in Mexico. Walker was killed by a lance shortly afterwards at the Battle of Huamantla while carrying the same pistols

COLT WALKER REVOLVER

The Colt Walker was the first revolver to be purchased by the US Army Ordnance Department. Co-designed by inventor Samuel Colt and renowned soldier Samuel Hamilton Walker. Colt considered the revolver "as effective as a common rifle at 100 yards (90 metres) and superior to a musket even at 200."

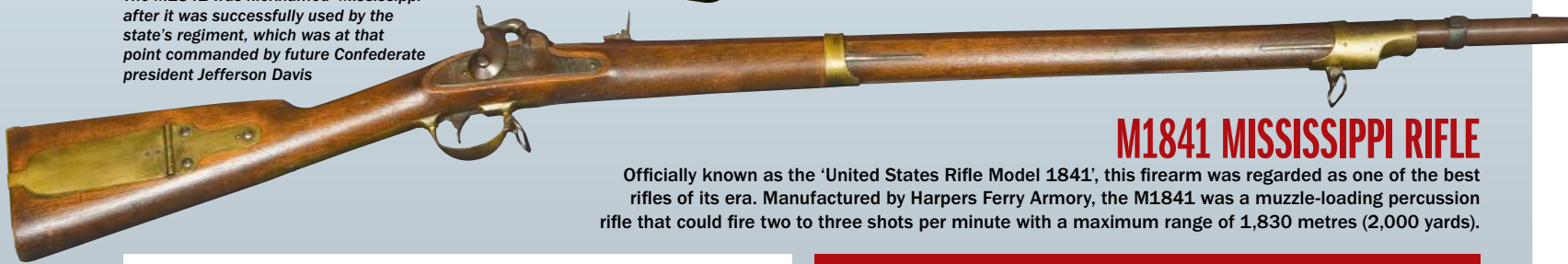


Left: A Morse-Vail telegraph key from 1844. The technological leaps of the 19th century were remarked upon by a military observer, who said, "Even five years may modify plans of defence now reputed most indispensable"

MORSE TELEGRAPHY

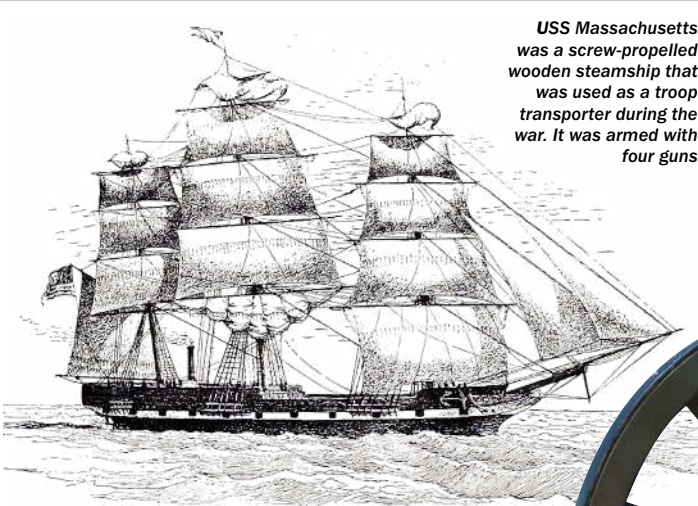
Samuel Morse invented his famous electrical telegraph system in 1844, and it was quickly introduced to US forces. News could now arrive from the front in days, and politicians and generals could react rapidly to changing circumstances. It was a giant leap forward for military communications.

The M1841 was nicknamed 'Mississippi' after it was successfully used by the state's regiment, which was at that point commanded by future Confederate president Jefferson Davis



M1841 MISSISSIPPI RIFLE

Officially known as the 'United States Rifle Model 1841', this firearm was regarded as one of the best rifles of its era. Manufactured by Harpers Ferry Armory, the M1841 was a muzzle-loading percussion rifle that could fire two to three shots per minute with a maximum range of 1,830 metres (2,000 yards).



USS Massachusetts was a screw-propelled wooden steamship that was used as a troop transporter during the war. It was armed with four guns

STEAM WARSHIPS

Steamboats had been used on American inland waters since the early 19th century. Because they could steam through currents, materials and information could be rapidly transferred both upstream and downstream. Military dispatches, supplies and troops began to be transported by steamboat, and steamers even participated in the amphibious assault on Veracruz.

"STEAMERS EVEN PARTICIPATED IN THE AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT ON VERACRUZ"

M1841 MOUNTAIN HOWITZER

US artillery was the best in the world during the 1840s and greatly contributed to the US victory in Mexico. The mountain howitzer was the jewel in the USA's arsenal. Lightweight, mobile and versatile, with a short bronze barrel, the howitzer fired 5.4-kilogram (12-pound) rounds that included canisters, shells and spherical case shots.

During the war, the US Army developed the concept of 'flying artillery', where each artilleryman was mounted and could gallop around the battlefield towing his cannon to wherever it was required



Images: Alamy

HOW THE WAR WAS WON

PART I THE GENERALS

In summer 1918 Foch unleashed his carefully prepared counter-offensive – co-ordinated attacks to which the Germans could find no answer

WORDS PROFESSOR WILLIAM PHILPOTT

On 7 August 1918 Ferdinand Foch was made marshal of France, a deserved reward for checking the German Spring Offensive. The next day his systematic destruction of the German army, the so-called 'Hundred Days' Offensive, began. Starting off with the offensive at Amiens – that Foch's opponent Ludendorff remembered in his memoirs as "the black day for the German army in the history of the war" – the Allied armies under Foch's direction would drive the Germans out of France and much of Belgium with a co-ordinated and sustained series of large-scale offensives that culminated with the 11 November armistice.

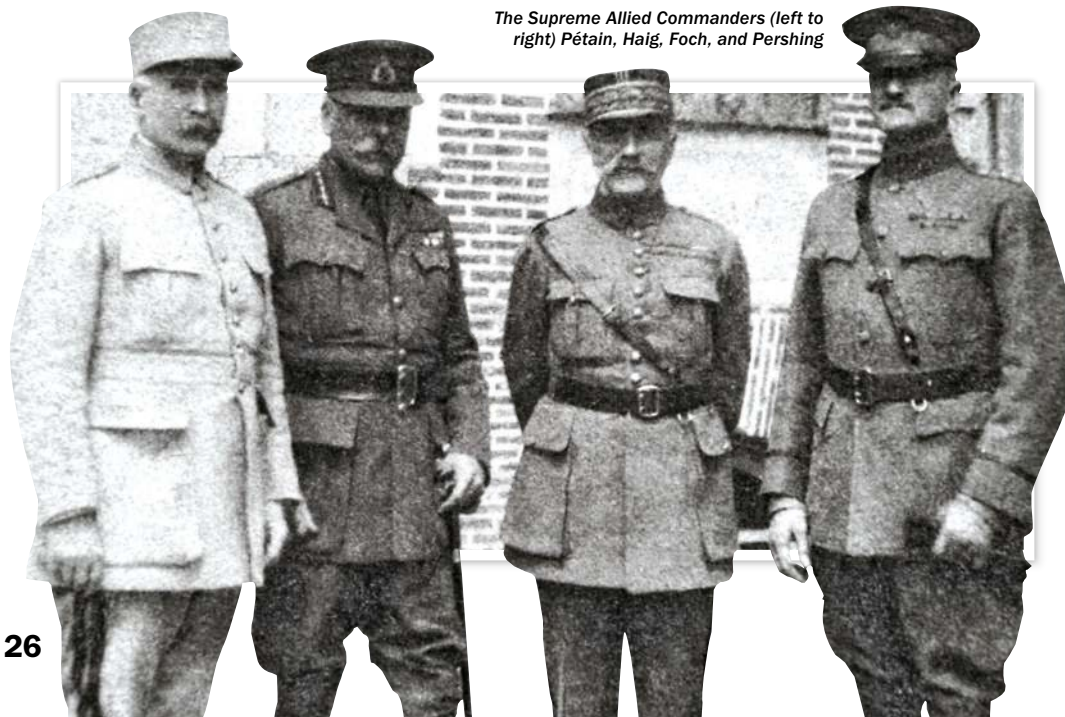
Since the end of the inconclusive 1916 Somme Offensive, Foch had been preparing to take on the enemy in one huge and prolonged battle that would settle the war. He had judged that the Somme Offensive had been on too small a scale and too slow to destroy Germany's manpower reserves, and that to win the war, offensives would have to be scaled up and sped up. This would require militarily efficient armies, but also much more modern war material – aircraft, tanks and above all guns and shells – which the allies would

possess in abundance come 1918. The style of battle in which the armies under Foch's direction would fight during this last phase of the war was faster, more mobile and more intensive than that of the slogging, attritional battles of the middle years of the war, and anticipated the methods of the next war. The Allies' armies were no longer blunt instruments but well-equipped, experienced and supple fighting forces. With a soldier who understood warfare to direct them, they would achieve a series of victories that deserve far greater recognition than they have 100 years later.

After the war Foch was often criticised for his obsession with the offensive, but Foch knew that the only way to defeat Germany and to liberate France was to break the enemy's army materially and morally, and that this could not be done with a defensive strategy, which risked France's allies being picked off one by one.

Foch also knew that France could not win without the resources and cooperation of her allies, and that his own inspirational leadership was vital to harnessing those allies to achieve their common objective. In January, anticipating that the Allies would first have to meet and defeat a powerful German offensive, Foch had recommended that they "be in a position

The Supreme Allied Commanders (left to right) Pétain, Haig, Foch, and Pershing



Men of the Seaforth Highlanders move forward from their trench on 29 August during the offensive

Digital colorization: Marina Amaral



"FOCH KNEW THAT THE ONLY WAY TO DEFEAT GERMANY AND TO LIBERATE FRANCE WAS TO BREAK THE ENEMY'S ARMY MATERIALLY AND MORALLY, AND THAT THIS COULD NOT BE DONE WITH A DEFENSIVE STRATEGY"



to develop [separate] actions in the form of a combined decisive offensive if the attrition of the enemy or any favourable circumstance in the general situation allows us to anticipate success from doing so". In high summer that moment finally arrived. After pushing the Germans back from the Marne salient in July, Foch had called Philippe Pétain, Douglas Haig and John Pershing, respectively commanders of the French, British and American armies in France, to a meeting at his headquarters in Bombon, where he explained his plan to beat the German army.

All three army commanders had reservations. Pétain's forces were worn out after four years of fighting; Haig's army had been fighting intensively since March and needed rest; Pershing's divisions were raw and still being trained. Foch listened to his colleagues' concerns: "I insisted that I had given due weight to the temporary weaknesses mentioned, and I urged the fact that a proper combination of our forces would make the contemplated programme practicable, especially as we could... hasten it or slow it up according to the success obtained as we went along."

The commanders-in-chief went away to study the plan, and within 48 hours gave their approval. Although more ambitious than any hitherto presented, the plan made sense, and Foch had demonstrated that he could co-ordinate the Allied forces that would execute it. That meeting took place on 24 July. A fortnight later the plan was engaged. Foch's strategy had two stages. The first would push the Germans back to the

"THE BATTLE WOULD BE A SURPRISE ATTACK DEVELOPING THE COMBINED-ARMS METHODS EMPLOYED SUCCESSFULLY IN THE BATTLE OF CAMBRAI THE PREVIOUS NOVEMBER"

positions they had advanced from in the spring, thereby freeing up Allied communications.

The second, if Foch judged the moment opportune, would drive the enemy from their prepared defences and complete their destruction. Inherent in Foch's method was the intention not just to recapture lost ground, but to paralyse, degrade and ultimately destroy the fighting capacity of the German army once and for all. As Foch put it on 24 July, "It is apparent that, owing to the difficulty which the Germans find in keeping up the strength of their various units at the front, a new crisis is now asserting itself... actions must succeed each other at brief intervals, so as to embarrass the enemy in the utilisation of his reserves and not allow him sufficient time to fill up his units."

The Battle of Amiens

On 8 August the Battle of Amiens, the first action in Foch's overall scheme, which was designed to push the enemy out of artillery

range of the vital railway junction at Amiens, commenced. Australian and Canadian forces of General Henry Rawlinson's Fourth Army, supported by a British and French army corps on either flank, would spearhead the attack across the Santerre plateau south of the River Somme.

The battle would be a surprise attack developing the combined-arms methods employed successfully in the Battle of Cambrai the previous November. The Canadians would be moved into the area secretly: their presence in the line was seen by the Germans as an indication of an impending attack, so a clever deception plan gave the impression that the Canadians were deploying further north in Flanders.

There would be no preliminary bombardment: instead the guns pre-registered on enemy defensive strongpoints and artillery positions, ready to fire at zero-hour when the first waves of infantry – supported by over 2,000 guns, 800 aircraft and 500 tanks, including the new fast, light, machine gun-armed 'Whippet' tanks – left their trenches. A second wave of divisions would leapfrog through the first after the first objective was taken – the intention was to sustain the momentum of the attack to get to and beyond the enemy's gun line – and mobile field guns, cyclists, cavalry and motorised machine guns were available to exploit opportunities that arose as the defence was overwhelmed.

The British and French guns began firing at 4.20am, one hour before dawn. The British and Dominion infantry left their trenches at the same time, following a rolling barrage that



**FERDINAND
FOCH**



**PHILIPPE
PÉTAIN**



**HENRI
GOURAUD**



**ADOLPHE
GUILLAUMAT**



**PAUL
MAISTRE**



**MARIE-ÉUGÈNE
DEBENEY**

THE 'WINNING TEAM'

BY 1918 THE FRENCH ARMY WAS LED BY EXPERIENCED SOLDIERS WHO HAD LEARNED HOW TO FIGHT MECHANISED BATTLES WITH ACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF CASUALTIES

Given that World War I is not remembered for its generalship, the fact that a highly competent and experienced group of senior commanders, who proved their worth during the Hundred Days, had emerged from the conditions of trench warfare may surprise. In a war in which the military arts were refashioned, thinking, practical and determined individuals were needed to take on the responsibilities of high command, to manage complex military machines and to deliver the results

that made strategic victory possible. In the French army a group of generals who had held relatively junior commands in 1914 now held the senior commands – Foch himself had started the war commanding XX Army Corps, although by 1915 he was directing a group of armies. What they had in common was a wealth of experience in offensive and defensive battles, an understanding of the French army as well as the style of warfare it was now fighting, and sympathy for the common soldiers they commanded.

At the head of the army Philippe Pétain, who had restored morale after the crisis that followed the failure of General Robert Nivelle's spring 1917 offensive, had the confidence of the men he led. He

was a very experienced field commander, having begun the war in command of a brigade and been promoted rapidly to command the elite XXXIII Army Corps in the Artois offensive in spring 1915, before directing Second Army in the defence of Verdun and leading Central Army Group.

Pétain's two immediate subordinates in summer 1918, Marie-Émile Fayolle and Paul Maistre, commanding respectively the Reserve and Central Army Groups that were to push the Germans back to the Franco-Belgian frontier, had also fought in Artois. Fayolle had commanded a division in Pétain's corps and had become its commander when Pétain was promoted, while Maistre had commanded the neighbouring XXI Army Corps. Foch had directed that offensive as Northern Army Group commander, and would also supervise Fayolle in 1916 when the latter, now commanding Sixth Army, fought the Battle of the Somme.



In autumn 1918 German defences were less formidable than in previous battles, but well-provided with machine guns



**MARIE-ÉMILE
FAYOLLE**



**CHARLES
MANGIN**



**JEAN-MARIE
DEGOUTTE**



**HENRI
BERTHELOT**



**EDMOND
BUAT**



**GEORGES
HUMBERT**

These men not only fought together; they had thought and taught together, educating a whole generation of senior officers now in positions throughout the army. Foch, Pétain and Fayolle all lectured at France's staff college at the turn of the century and Maistre had been Foch's assistant for a while. Other pre-war professors could be found in senior positions – Generals Marie-Éugène Debeney and Adolphe Guillaumat, commanding First and Fifth Armies, and General Edmond Buat, a former army commander and now Pétain's chief of staff. They had experience of staff work as well as command. Debeney, for example, had been First Army chief of staff in 1914, a division and army corps commander in 1916 at Verdun and the Somme, then Pétain's chief of staff in 1917 when he assumed command of the army. After the war Debeney would become head of the French army, as would Foch's own chief of staff, Maxime Weygand.

“THESE MEN NOT ONLY FOUGHT TOGETHER; THEY HAD THOUGHT AND TAUGHT TOGETHER”

The rest of Foch's winning team were men who had proved themselves aggressive and effective commanders in the field. Three had learned their profession serving in France's colonies before the war: General Henri Gouraud of Fourth Army, who had lost an arm at Gallipoli; General Georges Humbert of Third Army, which he had commanded since 1915, after commanding the elite Moroccan Division at the start of the war; and General Charles Mangin, Nivelle's right-hand man in the counter-offensive at Verdun who, if insubordinate at times, could be relied

upon to strike hard and win battles. General Henri Berthelot, commanding Fifth Army, had been chief of army operations at the start of the war, a corps commander, and head of the French military mission to Romania that had reconstructed that army after its defeat in 1916.

The newest member of the team, General Jean-Marie Degoutte of Sixth Army, another colonial soldier, was appointed in July 1918, after his old-school predecessor had failed to contain the German attack on the Marne. Degoutte was a typical product of the army's culture – a former army chief of staff and division and army corps commander who had distinguished himself as a commander of the Moroccan Division on the Somme and at Verdun. Their armies would march side by side to victory, won on the effort of their weary soldiers but made possible by the skill and drive of their generals.

HOW THE WAR WAS WON

Amiens was a combined-arms battle: tanks, infantry and artillery would all move forwards together



**“UNDER COVER OF AN EARLY MORNING FOG, THE
ATTACKING INFANTRY, SUPPORTED BY MEDIUM
TANKS, SWEEPED FORWARDS AT A RAPID PACE THROUGH
STARTLED AND DISORGANISED GERMAN FORMATIONS
WHOSE MEN WERE STILL SHAKING OFF THEIR SLEEP”**



HOW THE WAR WAS WON

advanced 91 metres (100 yards) every two minutes. The French infantry launched their main assault 45 minutes later, having seized the enemy's front line trenches at zero-hour.

Under cover of an early morning fog, the attacking infantry, supported by medium tanks, swept forwards at a rapid pace through startled and disorganised German formations, whose men were still shaking off their sleep. There was a whole day of glorious sunshine ahead, during which the initial surprise could be exploited. Once they had taken the enemy's front lines, the tanks supported a further advance. It was a grand spectacle, a modern army on the move. "We could not believe it at first," wrote one French soldier, "a screen of patrolling cavalry was climbing out of the valley... A few hundred metres behind the horsemen came lots of narrow infantry columns climbing the slopes... Behind them columns of artillery and lorries were appearing from all sides, snaking across the countryside using every possible route. It gave a sense of order and power. It was like a flood tide... accompanied by the roar of aeroplanes."

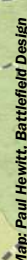
The second objective was largely taken by mid-morning by the second wave of divisions, after which cavalry, supported by Whippet tanks, pushed on to the final objective, which they would hold until the infantry came up. Inevitably progress slowed, as the enemy deployed reinforcements and the advancing troops tired and suffered casualties and disorganisation. Co-operation between the cavalry and Whippet tanks was an experiment that did not really work – the cavalry dashed forwards too quickly for the tanks to keep pace – although the supposedly obsolescent horsemen enjoyed their best day of the war. At one point a squadron operating well in advance captured a German leave train full of troops.

However, the battle was not a complete walkover: British III Corps, covering the northern flank of the advance, was held up on the Chipilly Ridge north of the Somme valley, and the Australians advancing immediately south of the river took casualties from flanking machine gun fire as a consequence. The ridge did not fall until late the next day. Nevertheless, by the end of the day the Australians, Canadians and French had advanced up to 13 kilometres (eight miles), through and beyond the enemy's gun line, inflicting 27,000 casualties and capturing 16,000 prisoners and 300 guns. Nine German divisions had been broken. British, Australian and Canadian casualties totalled 8,000.

It was part of Foch's plan to exploit success laterally. On 8 and 9 August, General Fayolle, commanding the French Reserve Army Group, committed two further army corps from General Debeney's First Army to expand the battle southwards. On 10 August General Humbert's Third Army entered the battle, breaking the German defences on its front and advancing rapidly to seize Montdidier. By 11 August, when the Battle of Amiens-Montdidier was closed down in the face of strengthening enemy resistance, the Allies had penetrated 19 kilometres (12 miles) at their deepest point on a 48-kilometre (30-mile) front, eliminating the threat to Amiens. As in the earlier German offensives, initial momentum had slowed over subsequent days. Foch and his subordinates

THE HUNDRED DAYS OFFENSIVE





had learned not to push against strengthening resistance, but to dislocate another sector of the line once reserves had been committed to reinforce the main battle. Amiens-Montdidier would be followed up by attacks by British Third and First and French Tenth Armies in mid-August, expanding the battle north and south.

In four days the Allied armies had recaptured more ground than they had managed in four and a half months on the Somme in 1916. Above all, however, as British Prime Minister David Lloyd George recognised, "The effect of the victory was moral and not territorial." The German soldiers had been shocked and overwhelmed, and despondency started to spread throughout the army. Ludendorff himself was on the verge of nervous collapse, and his decision-making became increasingly erratic as his armies were swept aside over the following weeks.

With his centre crumbling, Ludendorff had to order a withdrawal to a more defensible line: this was to be the old 1916 frontline on the Somme. But the momentum of the British advance drove the Germans from these improvised positions with little difficulty in late

August. The next line of defence lay at the rear of the Somme battlefields, the optimistically named 'Winter Line' on which Ludendorff expected his men to hold until 1919.

This increasingly desperate belief that a solid, linear defensive position might still be resumed in the conditions of modern warfare drew criticism from his subordinates. Army group commander General von Gallwitz noted as the Winter Line was stormed, "I am at a complete loss to understand Ludendorff's thinking in the wake of the complete turnaround in the situation. A step-by-step withdrawal from one position to another will not achieve anything. The enemy has the complete initiative." But Ludendorff had little choice by this point. Although seriously understrength, reserve divisions had to be recommitted after limited rest to shore up the crumbling defence. There was no possibility of organising a mass of reserves for a large-scale counterattack.

The Germans retreat

Foch had already achieved his aim of 'embarrassing' his adversary and had no

intention of giving the Germans time to rest and reconstitute their battered formations. British forces followed the retreating Germans across the old Somme battlefield closely and assaulted the Winter Line when they reached it. Third Army troops broke the line opposite Bapaume, which fell back into Allied hands on 29 August, while to the south Fourth Army advanced towards the river line.

The dominant high ground of Mont Saint-Quentin, commanding the bend in the River Somme at Péronne, had been occupied by the Prussian Guard. They were determined to hold it, but the Australians had other ideas. Finding themselves advancing into the bottleneck of the Somme bend, on 30 August they carried out an audacious flanking march northwards across the river to assault Mont Saint-Quentin from the north. After vicious hand-to-hand fighting, the elite German soldiers were driven from Mont Saint-Quentin and Péronne by the veterans of the 2nd Australian Division, whose divisional memorial now stands on the road from Mont Saint-Quentin to Péronne. The Australians won seven Victoria Crosses in the

"FOCH HAD ALREADY ACHIEVED HIS AIM OF 'EMBARRASSING' HIS ADVERSARY AND HAD NO INTENTION OF GIVING THE GERMANS TIME TO REST AND RECONSTITUTE THEIR BATTERED FORMATIONS"

Slow-moving logistics were always a problem in these advances. Here stubborn mules hold up the advance of an American ammunitions supply column in the Saint-Mihiel offensive

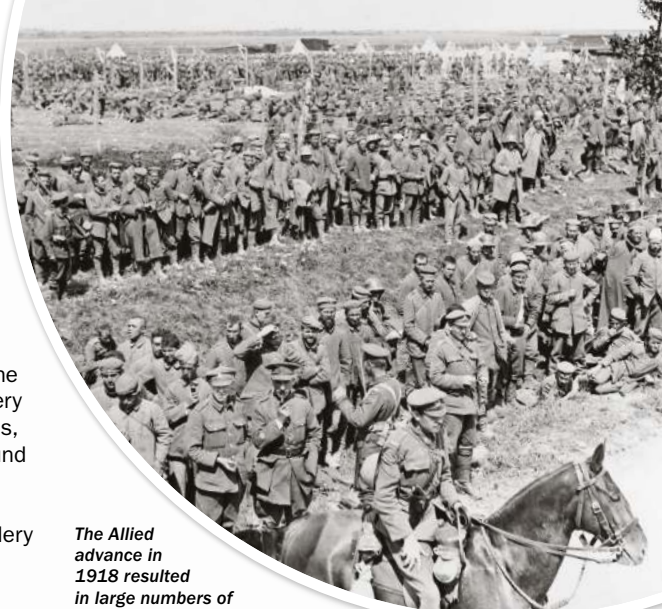
action. Further north, British First Army joined in the assault, seizing the northern extension of the Winter Line, the Drocourt-Quéant Line, on 2 September, bringing them into contact with the Hindenburg Line. Once again, the Canadians were to the fore, having been redeployed to the north as the advancing Allied line shortened.

It was a new type of fighting – fluid and exhilarating. One Australian private remembered, “The Germans were now well on the run. They left machine gunners, in strong positions, to give us trouble as their infantry retires... we started to advance without any barrage and the German machine gunners gave us a hot time but there were not many troops in front of us to impede our progress.” The Germans he faced were “very dejected and downhearted. They knew they were losing the war”. In part, this explains the large numbers who surrendered as the Allied forces advanced, although this was also a consequence of the new tactics, which trapped defenders before they could retreat. But the spectacular forward progress seen at Amiens was never repeated. Tanks remained mechanically unreliable so

could not be used in prolonged offensive operations – by the end of the Battle of Amiens less than a dozen machines were still in working order – and once the attack spread along the whole British front the available tanks had to be parcelled out to the individual armies rather than concentrated en masse.

British commanders largely reverted to the tried and tested tactics of pulverising artillery bombardments followed by infantry assaults, with tanks and cavalry employed if the ground was suitable: by this point in the war they were experienced enough to arrange large-scale battles at short notice. Although artillery remained the mainstay of their offensive tactics, the French, who now possessed thousands of aircraft to support ground operations and fast-moving Renault FT17 light tanks in large numbers, could operate more dynamically. Some 600 FT17 light tanks were brought up on lorries in the 48 hours before the attack on Montdidier.

The German army was soon showing the strains of this intensive and fast-paced combat.



The Allied advance in 1918 resulted in large numbers of German prisoners

Frontline units were depleted not only by losses and captures (and the influenza epidemic that was ravaging both sides by this point), but by a crisis of morale, which led to large numbers of men shirking in the rear rather than going up the line. Ludendorff on the other hand was

“BRITISH COMMANDERS LARGELY REVERTED TO THE TRIED AND TESTED TACTICS OF PULVERISING ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENTS FOLLOWED BY INFANTRY ASSAULTS”





obsessing too much about small tactical details and had lost sight of the bigger picture. "If only Ludendorff would not ring up every single corps direct, as well as the army group and army chiefs of staff!" army group commander Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria opined. In the later stages of the defence his subordinates would be on their own, however, as Ludendorff no longer had any reserves to give them.

The storming of the Winter Line left Ludendorff no option but to order a fighting retreat to the Hindenburg Line, the defensive position his troops had advanced from in March 1918. The French First, Third and Fourth Armies in the Oise and Aisne sectors joined the pursuit in the early days of September. Allied forces were established within striking distance of the next defensive obstacle by mid-September. Before it could be assaulted, there would have to be a pause to bring up heavy guns and ammunition for another set-piece attack. In the meantime, local actions improved the positions from which to launch the attack.

Foch would make good use of the pause to switch the battle to another previously quiet sector of the front. Pershing had been pressing him for an attack on the Saint-Mihiel salient, to the east of Verdun, in the US sector, with a view to striking at the German railway hub at Metz behind it. Although this attack was tangential to his main line of advance, Foch saw a good opportunity to give the newly formed American First Army battle experience, although he vetoed any attempt to reach Metz.

Supported by French guns, tanks, aircraft and infantry from French Second Army, the

attack was launched on 12 September. It was a success, with the salient being cleared by 15 September, although the Americans were pushing against a semi-open door since the Germans had anticipated the attack and had already started withdrawing their forces from the vulnerable salient.

American forces striking from the west joined up with those advancing from the south, while French troops attacked the apex of the salient to pin the defenders in place. The pincer movement trapped over 13,000 prisoners and 450 guns, although more than half the German defenders escaped the trap. One Austrian unit, called to fight on the Western Front, apparently surrendered as one. The fact that 752 machine guns were also captured indicates the nature of the defence that the Allies confronted.

Many of the USA's future senior leaders learned their trade in the battle. George S. Patton was the first officer assigned to the newly formed US Tank Corps, using his Renault FT17 tanks with a cavalryman's dash; William 'Billy' Mitchell directed the close air support for the advancing US infantry, and future Chief of Staff George Marshall ran First Army's logistics. A drive on Metz was over-ambitious, however, as the relatively inexperienced American forces were in chaos by the end of the battle.

Consolidating the victories

Between early August and late September, the Allies had reversed the position on the Western Front. Now the Germans were facing a dynamic offensive, and they seemed far less able to contain it than the Allies in the first half of the

year. Although no battle ever goes completely to plan, all Foch's attacks contributed to his objective – degrading the enemy's manpower, morale and material and dislocating his defensive operations. The fact that they also broke the will of his opposite number Ludendorff was an added bonus. The initial phase of Foch's counter-offensive – conceived, in Lloyd George's phrase, as a "series of hammer strokes designed to smash up the German army" – had pushed Ludendorff's forces back to their start line of March 1918 and inflicted further heavy casualties to add to those of the spring offensives.

The German army was not, however, broken, and Foch had to decide whether he could launch the second phase of his plan before winter and finish the war. To date only the six British and French armies holding the central section of the Western Front had done intensive fighting, although others had advanced when the opportunity arose. These hardened but weary British and French armies now faced the formidable obstacle of the Hindenburg Line, designed in 1916 to be impregnable. But warfare had changed much since then.

Foch was not one to shy away, or to improvise, when faced with such a challenge. He was ready, and his forces were able and willing. His method depended on rapid, relentless and intensive combat. To that end, in late September he would engage the rest of the armies he directed in their biggest battle yet, to spread the pressure all along the Western Front, smash the Hindenburg Line and to finally sweep the Germans from France and Belgium.

Images: Alamy, Getty

British medium tanks advancing across the Amiens battlefield

"THESE HARDENED BUT WEARY BRITISH AND FRENCH ARMIES NOW FACED THE FORMIDABLE OBSTACLE OF THE HINDENBURG LINE, DESIGNED IN 1916 TO BE IMPREGNABLE"

IN PART II

IN THE INTENSIVE CLIMAX OF THE WESTERN FRONT STRUGGLE, BY NOVEMBER 1918 FOCH WOULD BREAK THE GERMAN ARMY
ISSUE 59 ON SALE 6 SEPTEMBER

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MEDIUM MARK A WHIPPET TANK

The Medium Mark A Whippet tank complemented heavier British tanks with battlefield speed & firepower

WORDS MIKE HASKEW

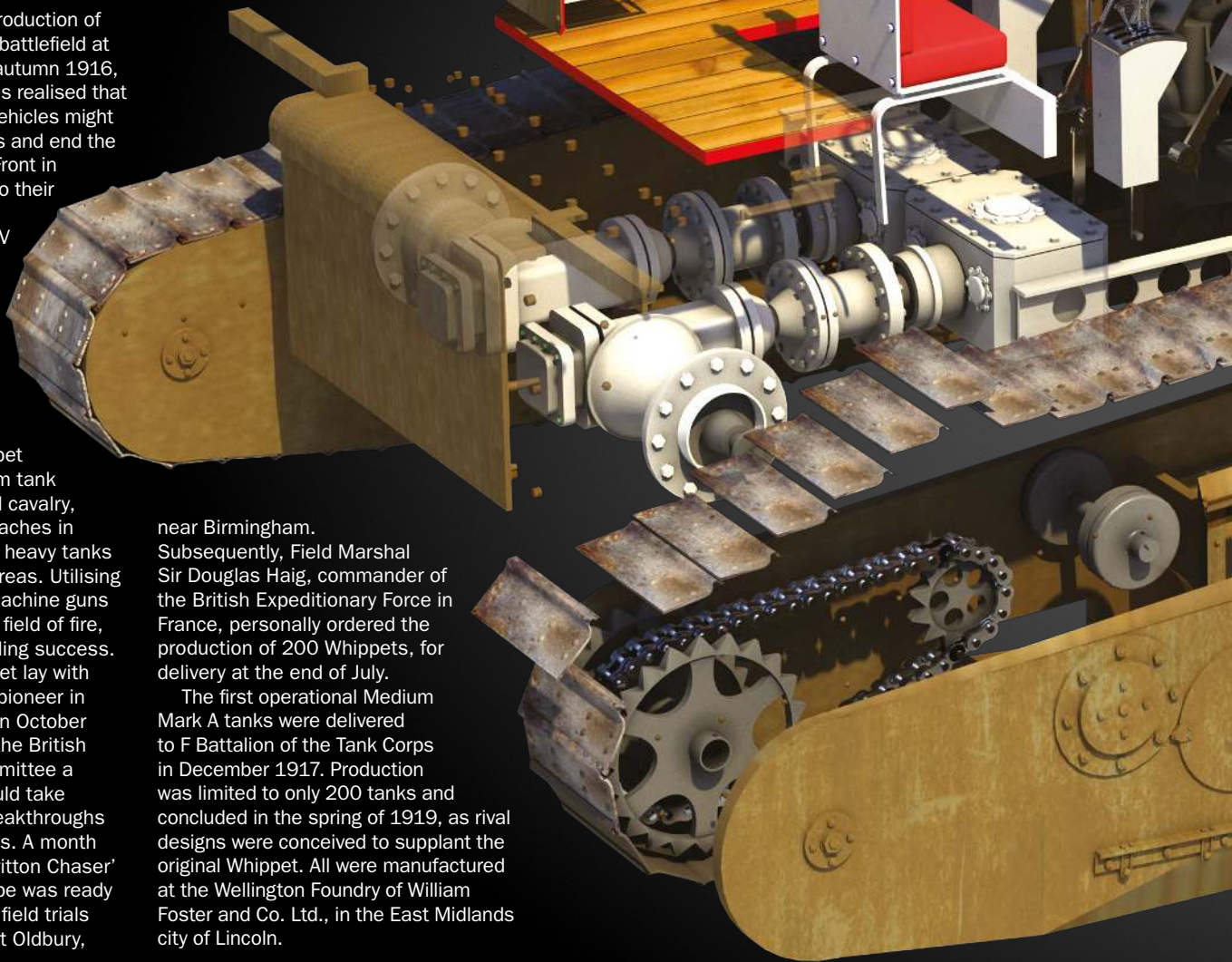
Following the introduction of the tank to the battlefield at the Somme in autumn 1916, British tacticians realised that the armoured vehicles might indeed breach German lines and end the stalemate on the Western Front in World War I. However, due to their slow speed and ponderous weight, their heavy Mark I, IV and V tanks were incapable of rapidly exploiting these initial gains, which allowed the enemy to re-establish defensive positions quickly.

The solution was the Mark A Medium Whippet. In relative terms, the Whippet was conceived as a medium tank that operated as battlefield cavalry, rapidly pouring through breaches in enemy lines created by the heavy tanks and sowing chaos in rear areas. Utilising speed and four mounted machine guns that covered a 360-degree field of fire, the Whippet was a resounding success.

The origins of the Whippet lay with engineer William Tritton, a pioneer in British tank development. In October 1916, Tritton proposed to the British military's Tank Supply Committee a lighter, faster tank that would take advantage of battlefield breakthroughs achieved by the heavy tanks. A month later, the concept of the 'Tritton Chaser' was approved. The prototype was ready by the following spring and field trials were conducted in March at Oldbury,

near Birmingham. Subsequently, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, commander of the British Expeditionary Force in France, personally ordered the production of 200 Whippets, for delivery at the end of July.

The first operational Medium Mark A tanks were delivered to F Battalion of the Tank Corps in December 1917. Production was limited to only 200 tanks and concluded in the spring of 1919, as rival designs were conceived to supplant the original Whippet. All were manufactured at the Wellington Foundry of William Foster and Co. Ltd., in the East Midlands city of Lincoln.



"BRITISH TACTICIANS REALISED THAT THE ARMoured VEHICLES MIGHT INDEED BREACH GERMAN LINES AND END THE STALEMATE ON THE WESTERN FRONT IN WORLD WAR I"

HOTCHKISS MACHINE GUNS

Four French-designed Hotchkiss light machine guns provided excellent firepower against enemy troops as the Whippet advanced rapidly through breaches in German trench lines.

DISTINCTIVE TURRET

The distinctive turret of the Whippet made it easily identifiable on the battlefield and gave its crew reasonably good visibility. However, it was also a target for enemy artillery.

TRACKS

The tracks of the Whippet were covered with mud chutes to reduce the possibility of the tank becoming mired in the suck of the Western Front battlegrounds.

TYLOR ENGINES

A pair of four-cylinder, side valve JB4 petrol engines gave the Whippet a remarkable top speed of 13.4kph (8.3mph), generating 90 horsepower.



MEDIUM MARK A WHIPPET TANK

COMMISSIONED: 1917 **ORIGIN:** UK
LENGTH: 6.1M (20FT) **WEIGHT:** 14 TONS
CREW: 3 **RANGE:** 130KM (80MI)
SPEED: 13.4KPH (8.3MPH)
ENGINE: 2 X TYLOR TWIN 4-CYLINDER, SIDE VALVE JB4 PETROL **PRIMARY WEAPON:** 4 X .303-CALIBRE MACHINE GUNS

**"SIZABLE MUD CHUTES ALONG THE FLANKS
AND REAR CHANNELLED MUD AWAY FROM THE
ROLLERS AND TRACKS, IMPROVING MOBILITY"**



British crewmen pose atop the turret of a Whippet during exercises. The tank proved a valuable asset as the Allies attempted to break the stalemate on the Western Front

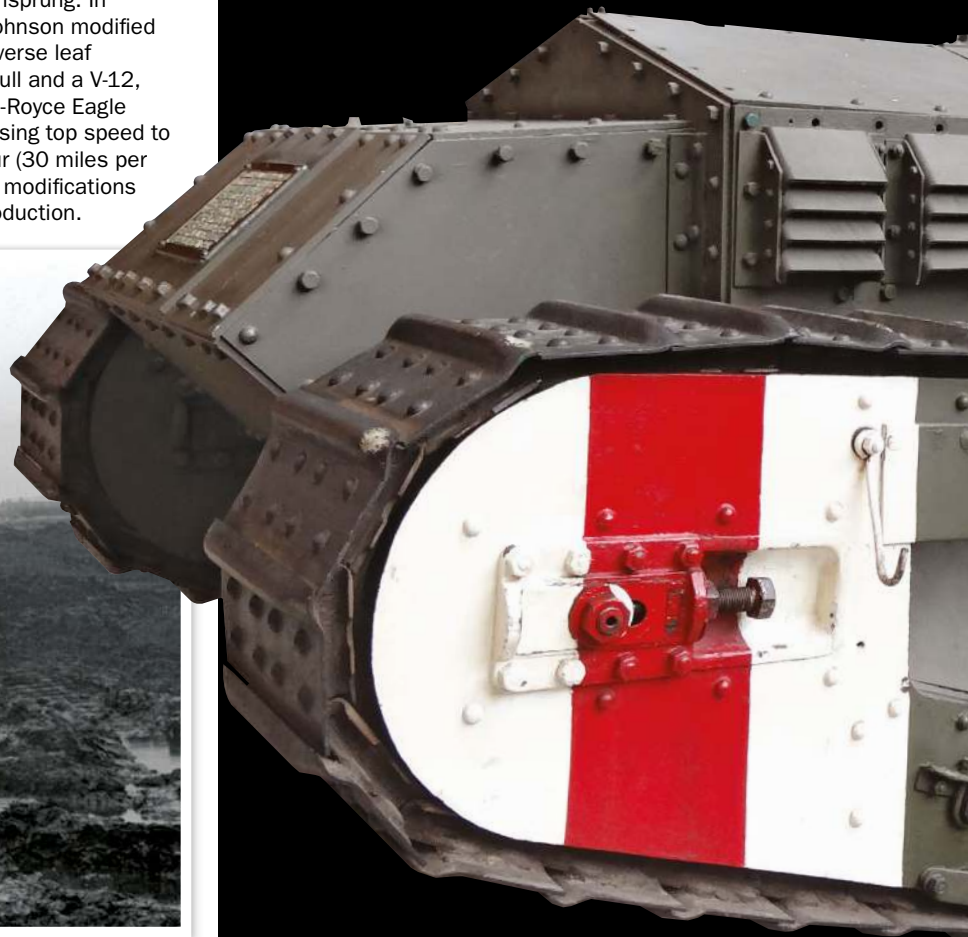
DESIGN

The Whippet design included shorter tracks, which dispelled the belief that the tracks had to be as long as the hull in order to ensure maximum capability to exit shell holes or traverse trenches. Sizable mud chutes along the flanks and rear channelled mud away from the rollers and tracks, improving mobility.

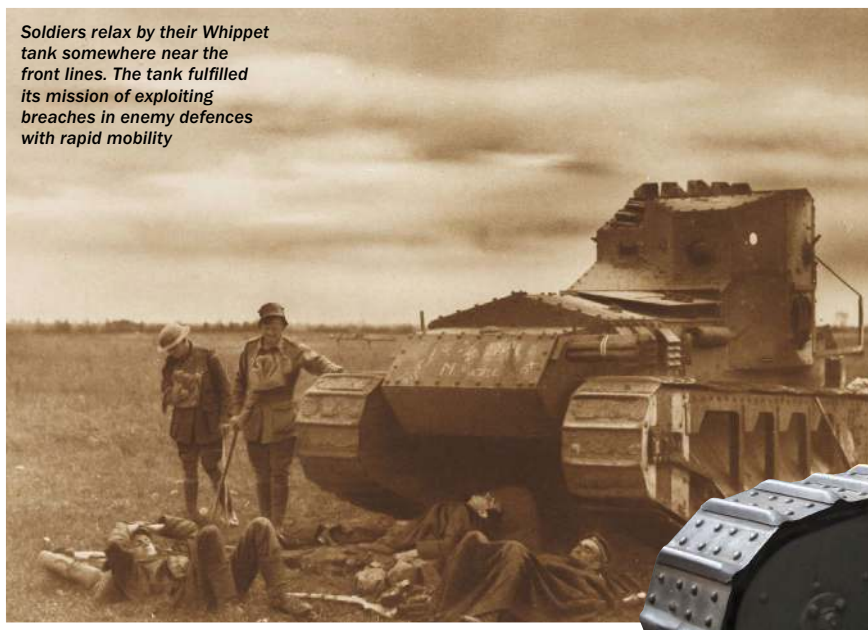
The fuel tank was forward in the chassis, which was originally unsprung. In 1918 Colonel Philip Johnson modified a Whippet, adding traverse leaf springs beneath the hull and a V-12, 360-horsepower Rolls-Royce Eagle aircraft engine, increasing top speed to 48 kilometres per hour (30 miles per hour). However, these modifications were too costly for production.



This Whippet demonstrates the tank's capability to traverse a muddy landscape. The Whippet employed shorter tracks than other tanks, improving earlier designs



Soldiers relax by their Whippet tank somewhere near the front lines. The tank fulfilled its mission of exploiting breaches in enemy defences with rapid mobility

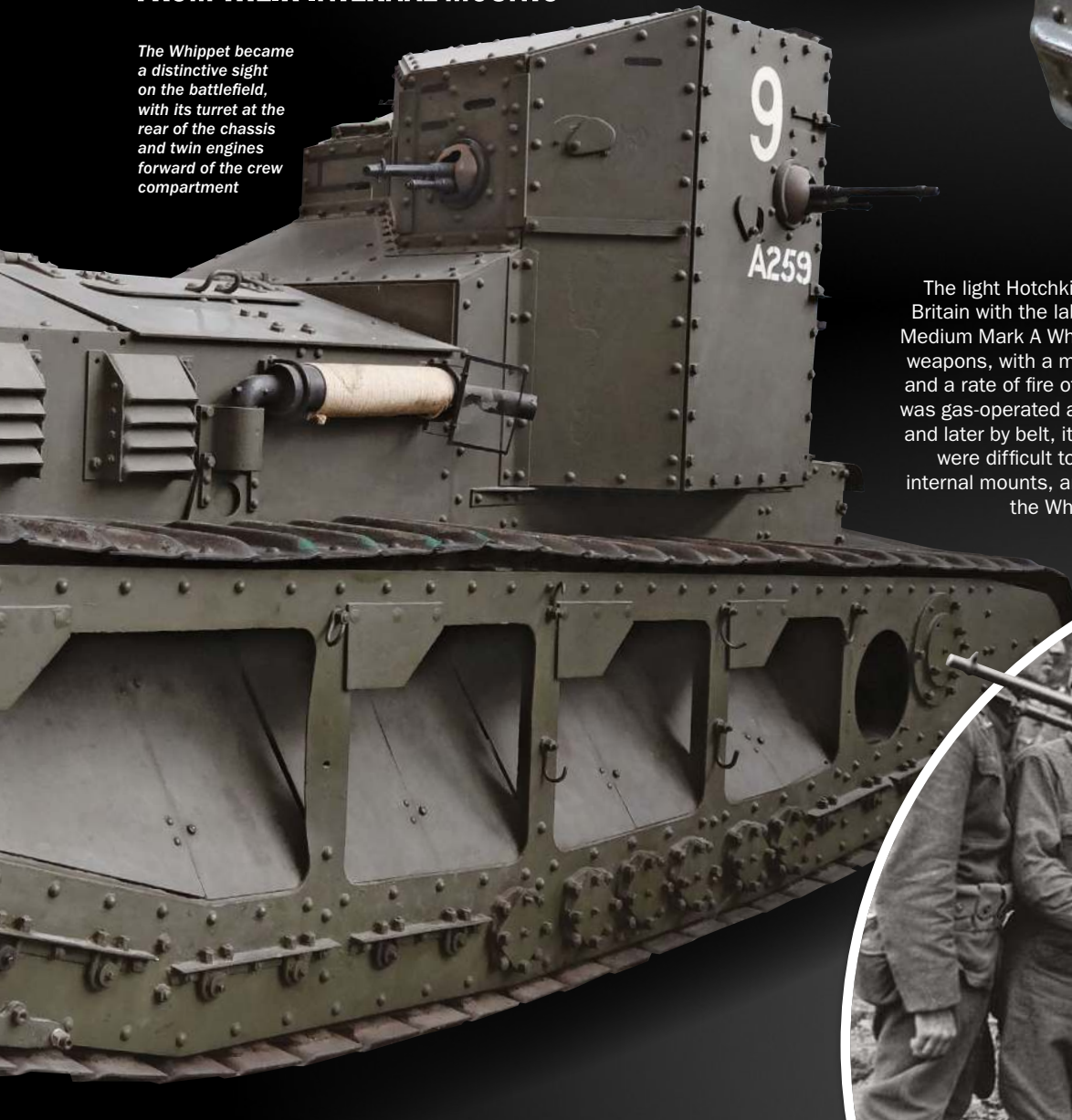


The Whippet stood high off the ground, its squared turret constructed of riveted plates to provide protection against small-arms fire



“THE GUNS WERE REMOVABLE FROM THEIR INTERNAL MOUNTS”

The Whippet became a distinctive sight on the battlefield, with its turret at the rear of the chassis and twin engines forward of the crew compartment



ARMAMENT

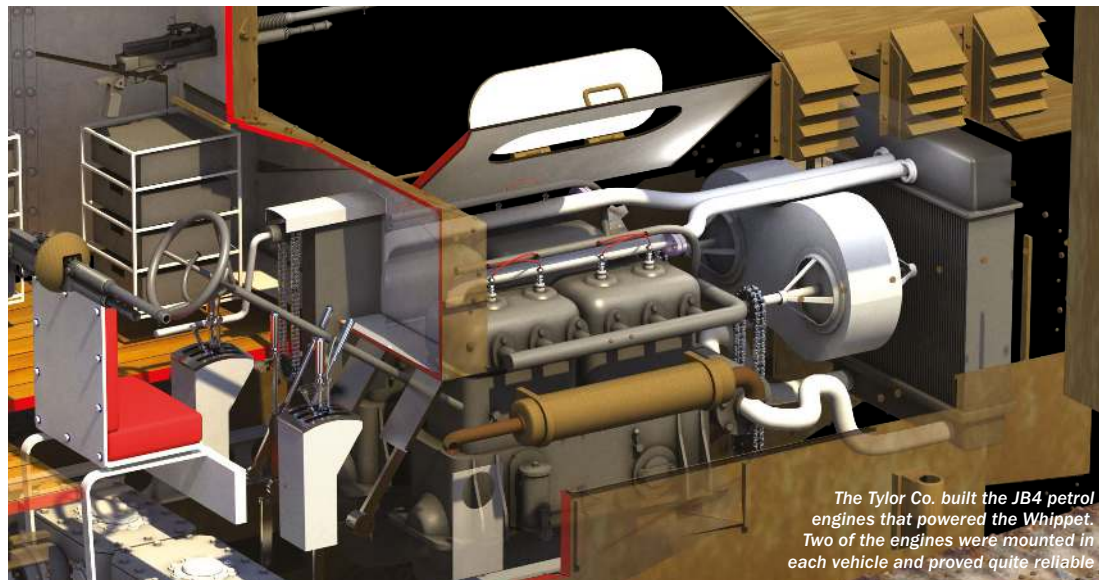
The light Hotchkiss M1909 machine gun was manufactured in Britain with the label 'Mark I', and 40,000 were completed. The Medium Mark A Whippet was armed with four of the .303-calibre weapons, with a maximum range of 3,800 metres (4,160 yards) and a rate of fire of up to 600 rounds per minute. The Hotchkiss was gas-operated and air-cooled. Fed by a 30-round strip initially and later by belt, it was sometimes prone to jamming, and parts were difficult to replace. The guns were removable from their internal mounts, and occasionally a fourth crewman was aboard the Whippet to operate one or more of the weapons.

Four French-designed Hotchkiss .303-calibre machine guns, manufactured under licence in Britain as the Mark I, were installed aboard the Whippet



ENGINE

The Tylor Co. traced its origins to the mid 18th century. Its twin four-cylinder, side-valve JB4 petrol engines powered the Medium Mark A Whippet, generating a combined 90 horsepower and a top speed of 13.4 kilometres per hour (8.3 miles per hour). The Whippet's performance was more robust than heavier tanks, particularly considering its comparable weight of 14 tons. The Tylor JB4 engine was similar to those that powered the double-decker buses through the streets of London, and each engine was paired with one of the Whippet's tracks. A complex steering system controlled the throttles of each engine, allowing the driver to execute turns.



The Tylor Co. built the JB4 petrol engines that powered the Whippet. Two of the engines were mounted in each vehicle and proved quite reliable

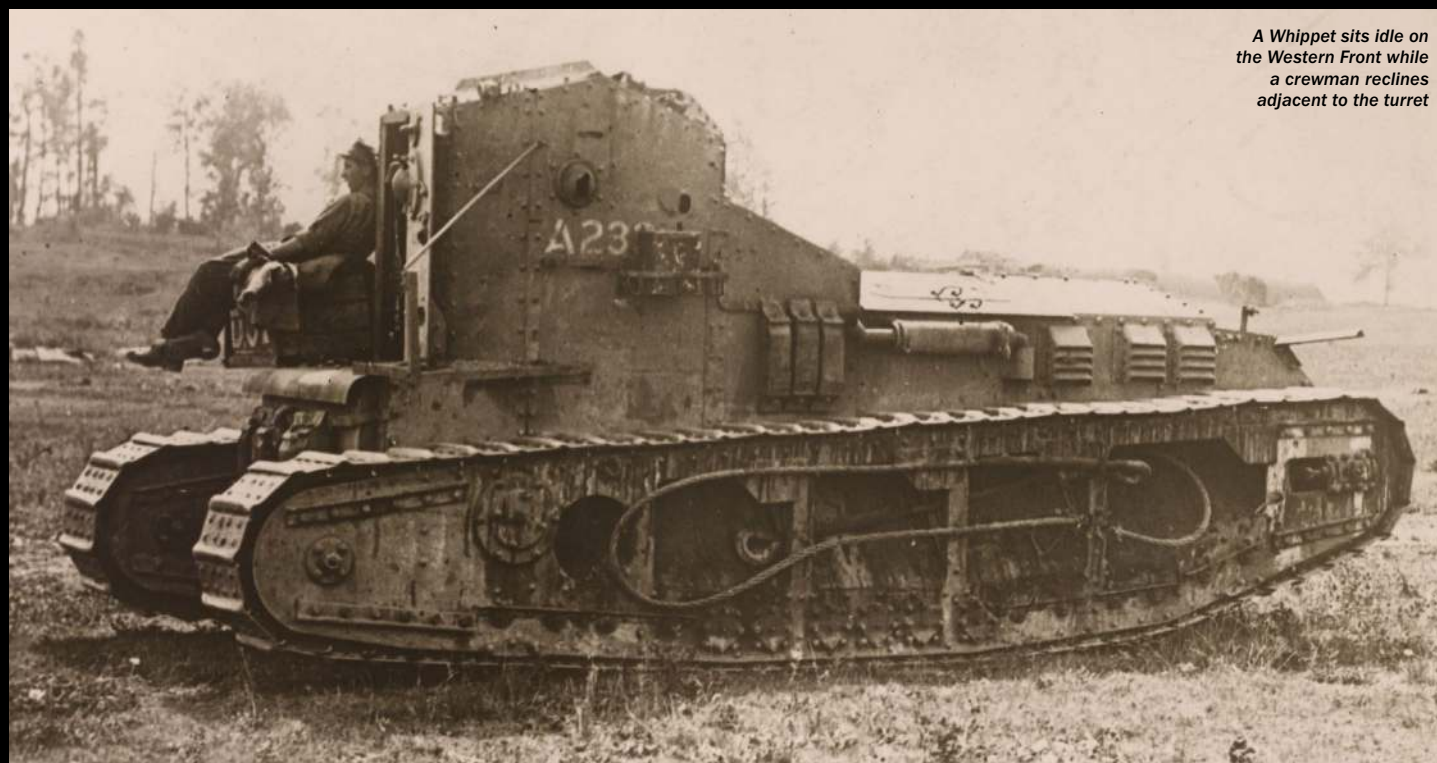


The cramped crew compartment of the Whippet subjected its occupants to the acrid combination of spent gunpowder and exhaust fumes

CREW COMPARTMENT

Early considerations for the Whippet involved a rotating turret, but that idea gave way to a fixed, polygon-shaped crew compartment, raised to the rear of the chassis and incorporating vision slits. Inside, the compartment was cramped, dark and noisy. Heat from the engine often created extremely high temperatures inside. The compartment was situated behind the engines, and exhaust fumes regularly trailed inside via its ventilation system. Combined with the acrid odour of gunpowder, the noxious fumes were capable of incapacitating crewmen at times. The three-man crew consisted of a commander, gunner and driver, who sat forward and steered by means of a wheel. Although space was limited, sometimes a fourth crewman was added.

“COMBINED WITH THE ACRID ODOUR OF GUNPOWDER, THE NOXIOUS FUMES WERE CAPABLE OF INCAPACITATING CREWMEN AT TIMES”



A Whippet sits idle on the Western Front while a crewman reclines adjacent to the turret

This artist's rendering depicts the impact of the Whippet on the battlefield, grinding across barbed wire obstacles as German troops are panicked and shot down



SERVICE HISTORY

THE MEDIUM MARK A WHIPPET WAS A BATTLEFIELD SUCCESS, ALTHOUGH IT WAS DEPLOYED IN LIMITED NUMBERS

The Whippet reached the battlefield in early 1918, and its crews first experienced combat during the German Spring Offensive. The Whippets blunted enemy attacks by covering the withdrawal of British troops and enabling them to re-establish defensive lines. At Hébuterne in northern France, a dozen Whippets caught two battalions of German soldiers on the move and forced them to retire.

Once the crisis had passed, the Whippets were assigned to tank battalions in company strength. On 24 April 1918, seven Medium Mark A Whippets rushed to the aid of a Mark IV heavy tank just exiting a fight with three German A7V tanks. The Whippets then caught several battalions of German infantry in the open and shredded them with .303-inch machine-gun fire. Some enemy soldiers were crushed under Whippet treads. Approximately 400 Germans were killed. Three Whippets survived the struggle. Later in the day, a Whippet was destroyed by an A7V.

The most memorable wartime Whippet exploit belonged to the crew of 'Musical Box', which terrorised the enemy for nearly 11 hours on 18

August 1918. Commanded by Lieutenant C.B. Arnold, Musical Box dashed through a breach in the enemy line and destroyed a German artillery battery. Unable to retire, Musical Box proceeded to hunt opportunistic targets, attacking infantry columns and supply convoys, ramming a German truck and pushing it into a stream, and machine-gunning an airfield and destroying an observation balloon.

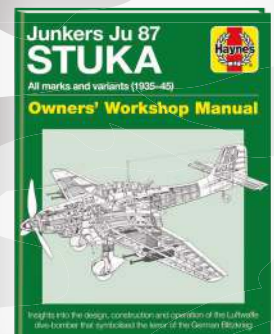
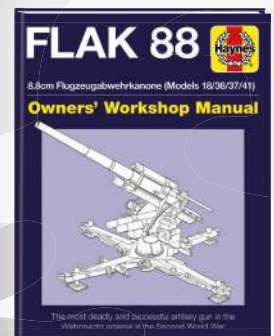
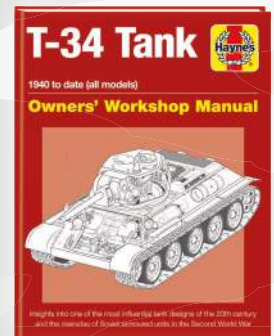
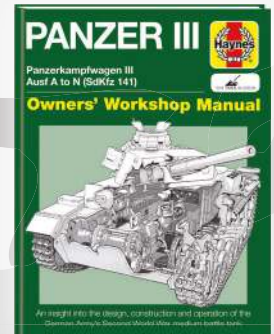
German bullets penetrated Musical Box's thin armour and pierced the petrol tank, forcing the crew to put on gas masks. When an artillery shell rocked the tank and set leaking fuel afire, the crew abandoned the Whippet. One crew member was shot dead. Arnold and the other crewman were taken prisoner.

After World War I, the British deployed the Whippet in Ireland and during the Russian Civil War, and several tanks were sold to Japan. It remained in service into the 1930s.

Whippet tank crewmen await orders to move forward into action on the Western Front



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WARTIME ENEMIES PEACETIME FRIENDS

WORDS TOM GARNER

Karl Koenig & Graham Stevenson fought on opposing sides during the same North African battle 75 years ago, but they are now heartily reconciled in friendship

It is late March 1943, and in a Tunisian mountain pass two teenage soldiers – one German, one British – are fighting in extremely hot, cramped tanks. Their objective: to defeat and possibly kill each other.

The soldiers are fighting for their countries and both believe their respective causes are just. As engines rumble, shells explode and machine guns fire, the young men are caught in a bloody battle that will help end the North Africa Campaign, but neither can know if they will survive.

Now, after three-quarters of a century, these two foes are indisputable friends. Karl Koenig and Graham Stevenson fought at the Battle of the Mareth Line as enemies but have since befriended each other in a heartfelt display of reconciliation. Koenig, who served in the Afrika Korps, contacted Stevenson's former regiment, the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry, in 1991, and has never looked back.

The Sherwood Rangers happily welcomed Koenig, and he became an honorary member of their regimental association, while Stevenson joined a few years later. Since meeting, the two men have attended numerous commemorations and events together in Europe.

Now in their 90s, Koenig and Stevenson discuss their war experiences and spread the powerful message of how mutual respect and understanding can unite former enemies in peace.

Karl Koenig (left) and Graham Stevenson (right) pose in front of a Sherman tank at Armouredgeddon Tank Museum, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire, 1 June 2018

"KARL KOENIG AND GRAHAM STEVENSON FOUGHT AT THE BATTLE OF THE MARETH LINE AS ENEMIES BUT HAVE SINCE BEFRIENDED EACH OTHER IN A HEARTFELT DISPLAY OF RECONCILIATION"



GRAHAM STEVENSON TROOPER

SHERWOOD RANGERS YEOMANRY

Graham Stevenson lied about his age to join the British Army. A native of Walsall, he joined the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry in Egypt and first served in M3 Grant tanks, before primarily fighting in M4 Sherman tanks between the ages of 17-19. As a member of the British Eighth Army, Stevenson fought at the Second Battle of El Alamein in late 1942 and pushed westwards across North Africa against Axis forces.

At the Battle of the Mareth Line, the Sherwood Rangers took part in a successful outflanking manoeuvre at the Tebega Gap against German positions. Stevenson would go on to participate in the liberation of Tunis and was later severely wounded while fighting in Normandy in July 1944.

AN UNDERAGE SOLDIER

How did you join the British Army?

My brother had been called up and I was working in an office, but I went into town where there was a recruitment centre. I was told to go to Birmingham, so I got the bus and found the place.

In Birmingham, the recruiter said, "What do you want? You're no good, how old are you?" I said 19, but he said, "You don't look 19 to me. Come back with your birth certificate." That got to me because I was two days away from my 17th birthday. I said, "I'm 18 now but 19 at the weekend, I don't want to get called up." He replied, "Good chap," and that was it, I was in. I wanted to join a fighting regiment like the infantry, but the armoured corps was suggested to me. I said, "That will do."



Graham Stevenson in uniform during WWII. Although he was only a teenager throughout his wartime service, Stevenson saw heavy action from El Alamein to Normandy

When did you arrive in Egypt?

It was probably about July 1942. We arrived at Port Tewfik by the Red Sea and took a train to Abbassia Barracks, near Cairo. I had a week or two to get acclimatised and then went to a place called Wadi El Natrun, which was a marshalling place for troops. That was where I became a Sherwood Ranger in late September. The regiment had fought in action to stop Rommel virtually at the gates of Cairo, and I presume we were replacements for casualties.

What were your first impressions of North Africa?

It was very different of course. The old stone barracks were from when Egypt was almost part of the British Empire. There used to be 'Debugging Hour' every Friday because the bugs used to come out of the stonework. I saw fellas with their backs completely covered in bug bites and we used to have old fruit cans with paraffin on the legs of the bed to keep them away.

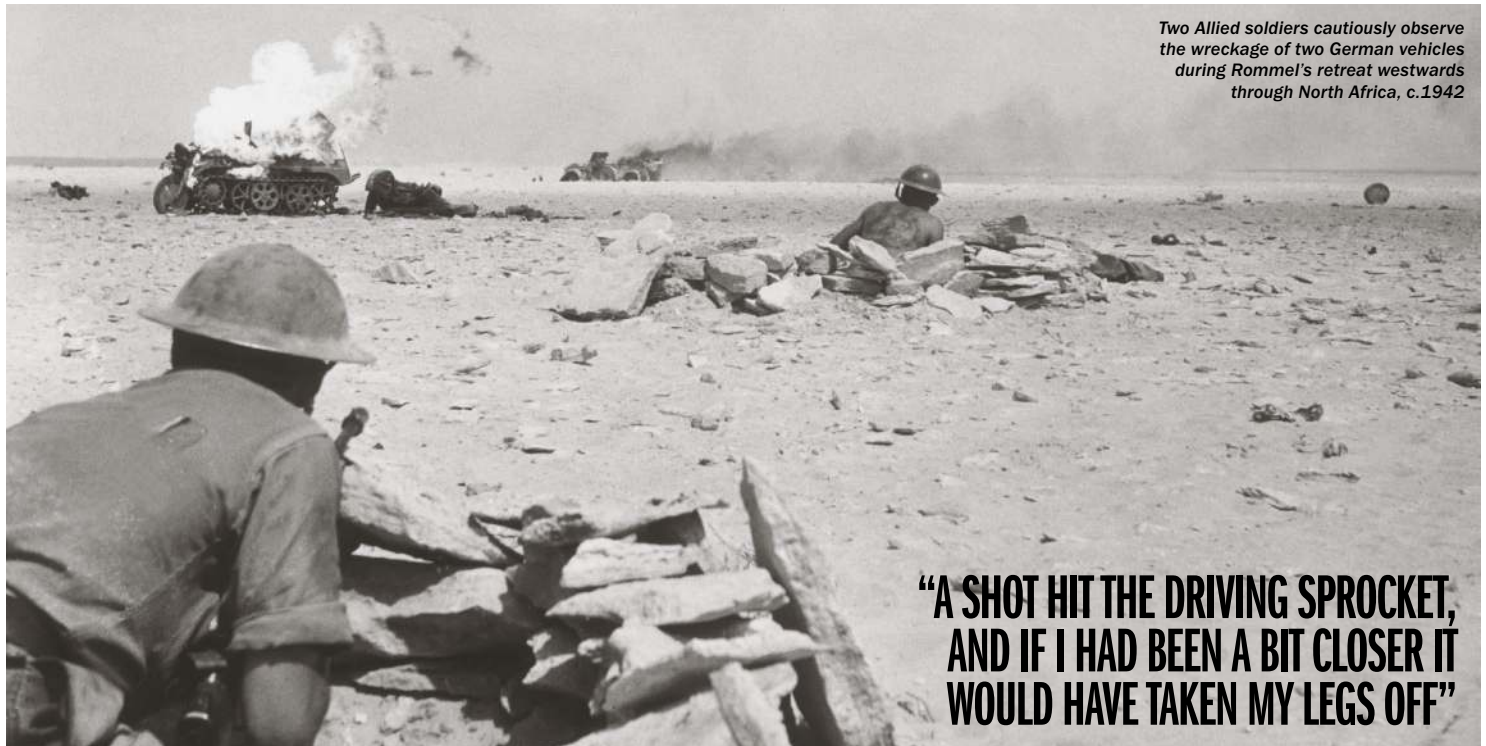
Around the parapet of the barracks there were also kite hawks (we used to call them 'shite hawks') that were quite capable of taking a meal out of your hands. It was a bit unpleasant, but they were all part of the scenery.

GRANTS, SHERMANS AND EL ALAMEIN

Which tanks did you fight in?

At El Alamein I first went in on an American [built] Grant. This was a six-man tank, you had to have a separate loader for the 75mm gun, which was my job. For loading, you're supposed to have heavy gloves for punching the round into the breach, but the drivers who delivered the Grant had pinched everything, including the gloves. My tank commander then gave me some kid gloves out of his kitbag and said, "Here, that's the best I can do." I thought that was a very good gesture on his part.

The Grant was knocked out and we then got onto Shermans, which had a five-man crew. I was the co-driver lap gunner, which meant that you had a machine gun and took it in turns with the driver when he got tired. It was pretty demanding.



Two Allied soldiers cautiously observe the wreckage of two German vehicles during Rommel's retreat westwards through North Africa, c.1942

"A SHOT HIT THE DRIVING SPROCKET, AND IF I HAD BEEN A BIT CLOSER IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN MY LEGS OFF"

WARTIME ENEMIES, PEACETIME FRIENDS

I couldn't really compare the Grant and Sherman, but they were a darn sight better than the laughable things I trained on. The Germans had much bigger tanks of course, with an 88mm gun that was an adapted anti-aircraft gun. They were real killers.

What are your memories of the Second Battle of El Alamein?

On the second day at Alamein a friend of mine from Catterick called Alec came to see me when he got to the squadron lines. He said, "I'm with a crew that I've got no faith in." The first day we went back in he was killed, which was pretty awful.

I myself had a Sherman knocked out from under me just before my 18th birthday. A shot hit the driving sprocket, and if I had been a bit closer it would have taken my legs off. The Shermans had an engine that ran on high-octane petrol so they went up like a torch! Luckily it didn't blow up or burst into flames, so I was very fortunate.

During the battle I was the loader and was the only crewmember that hadn't got a periscope, so I couldn't see what was going on. I picked up what was happening from the crew's conversations. It was a strange thing really: I can honestly say I never felt scared, but that was only because I was 17 and stupid.

What were fighting conditions like inside a tank?

Hot. When you fire your gun you get a lot of exhaust fumes from the shot, and the atmosphere gets pretty awful. Our driver would get scared, and he was a regular soldier. When you weren't in action you'd have your flaps and lid open, but they incorporated the periscope and you'd have to be careful not to break them. The driver would say, "Help me Steve," and I'd jump out, put my arm around the big gun, lean over and put it right.

TEBEGA GAP AND TUNIS

What was your role during the Battle of the Mareth Line at the Tebega Gap?

The Mareth Line was a heavily prepared position and was going to take a lot of casualties. As we were approaching it Montgomery came to the regiment and said we had to go on this left hook. We covered everything with camouflage netting and were stationary. As soon as it got dark we removed the netting and moved off into the mountains. It was hairy because we were in darkness so that aircraft wouldn't spot us. It was a surprise attack, and we managed to keep it a surprise.

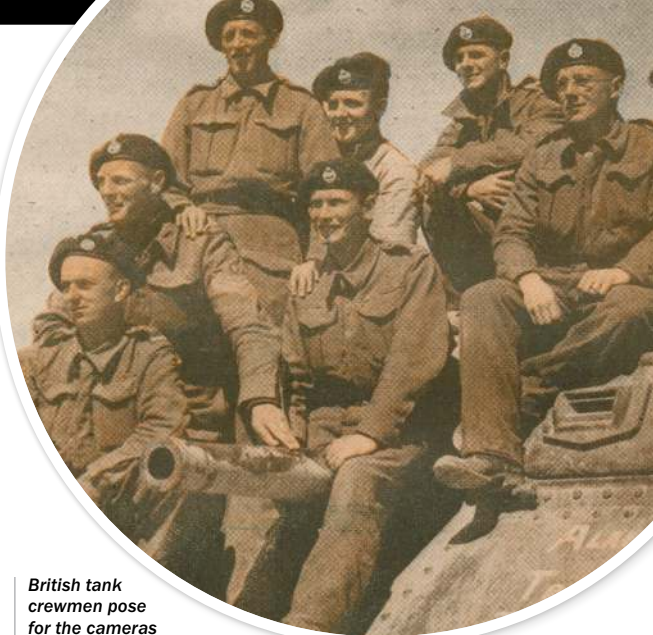
We went south, came back and then went up the back of the Mareth Line and shot them up the backside at the Tebega Gap, which was a feature in the hills. All of their equipment and everything was facing the wrong way. At one point there were half a dozen German tanks swanning about and we were knocking them off from where we were. It was a highly successful manoeuvre that made an awful lot of difference and saved a hell of a lot of casualties.

Where was Karl in relation to you during the battle at Tebega Gap?

I don't know for sure, but we were on the right flank and he was on the left. I didn't know who or what I was fighting against, but it was in that area. About ten years ago we met each other and looked at an artist's impression of the Battle of Tebega Gap. Karl asked if I was on the right flank and I said yes, then he said, "Oh, I was on the left flank." I replied, "It's a bloody good job we missed then!"

How did it feel to finally enter Tunis at the end of the campaign?

Good, but we were knocked about a bit. There was an unused cinema and we tried to drink wine like beer, which was pretty fatal. We were



British tank crewmen pose for the cameras after the Battle of the Mareth Line. The battle paved the way for the liberation of Tunis

as drunk as could be at this cinema because the fighting had finished by that time. We did a mock court martial with one of our fellas, which was just fooling around, but when the drinks are in, everything else goes out.

What was your opinion of Rommel and the German fighting ability?

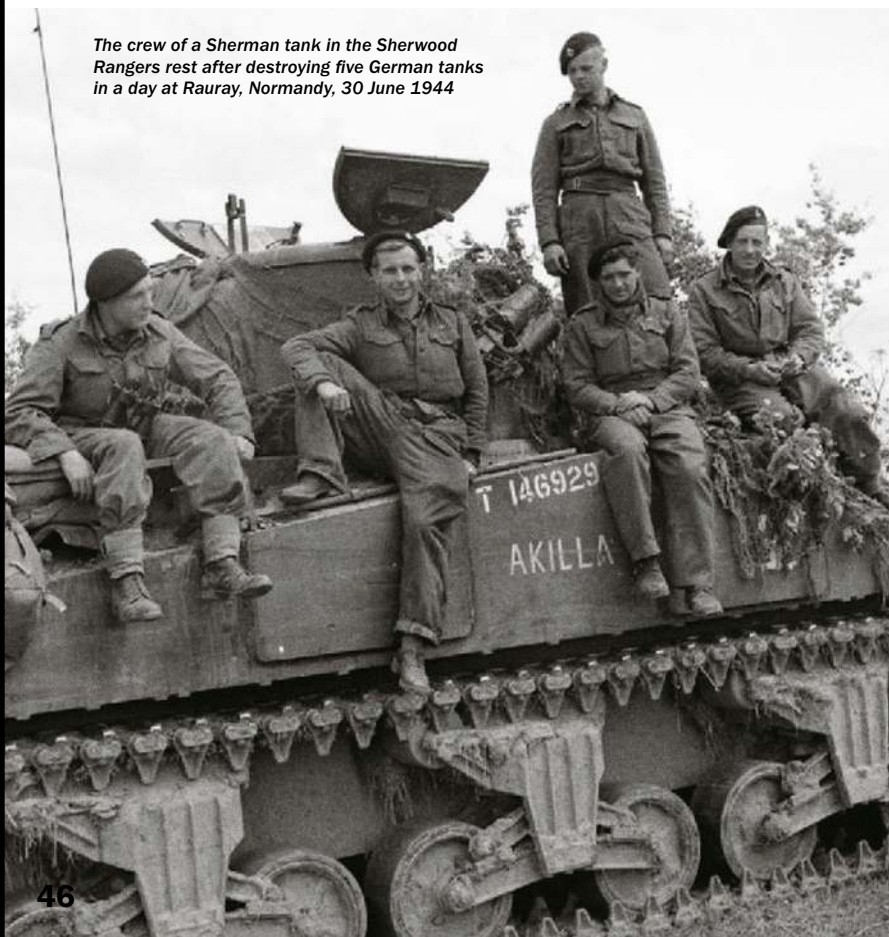
Rommel was quite a general and you wouldn't take any liberties with him. The Germans' fighting ability was very respectable, they knew what they were doing. It was a 'soldier's war' [in North Africa], with no civilians involved, damage to buildings or anything like that.

WOUNDED IN NORMANDY

When did you arrive in Normandy?

I went over on D-Day+14 after the regiment had landed at Gold Beach. They landed on 6 June and were at Bayeux, which they liberated on the

The crew of a Sherman tank in the Sherwood Rangers rest after destroying five German tanks in a day at Rauray, Normandy, 30 June 1944



Left: Stevenson met Captain Keith Douglas during his service. Douglas, who was also in the Sherwood Rangers, was killed in Normandy, and is often regarded as the finest British war poet of WWII



“THE SHERWOOD RANGERS WERE GENUINELY A HELL OF A REGIMENT, WE WERE THE ONLY ONES THAT EVER DID WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF US, AND THAT’S NOT JUST MY OPINION. GENERAL HORROCKS BOASTED WE WERE THE MOST RELIABLE REGIMENT HE HAD”

7th. They were on the outskirts on the 6th but they never went in because they had no infantry with them. It would have been suicide to go in, but as soon as Jerry [the Germans] realised they were there they evacuated. The beautiful cathedral and the tapestry were spared, so it went down very nicely.

The Sherwood Rangers were genuinely a hell of a regiment, we were the only ones that ever did what was expected of us, and that’s not just my opinion. General Horrocks boasted we were the most reliable regiment he had.

How were you wounded?

The Sherwood Rangers had had heavy casualties and we were taking some time to get up to strength. On 11 July we started off to head in the direction of Caen on the main road from Bayeux. Just before we got to Tilly-sur-Seulles my troop of three tanks were sent off to the left in the bocage. We supported a light infantry regiment, but when we got to them they were doing a runner to get the hell out.

Suddenly, the troop leader’s tank was blazing away and being hit. My tank was against a high hedge and I was with a ‘scratch’ crew. I don’t think they’d seen a shot fired in anger. The commander went over with an extinguisher to put the fire out and I said to him, “You might as well pee against it for all the good you’re going to do.”

I was a gunner by this time and in the turret of the Sherman. I then couldn’t believe my eyes: a German infantry patrol was coming up the middle of a field as if they were out for a stroll. I thought, “Dear me” and went to load about 30 yards (27 metres) away from them. I opened up with my coax [machine gun] and wiped them out. My wireless operator, who was also the loader, was absolutely terrified. He jumped out the top, ran away and I never saw him again.

There was also a German tank that had knocked out the troop officer’s tank. I don’t know how many of his crew had been hit, but he shouted from outside, “Throw me a Tommy gun down would you?” I asked what he was going to do and he said, “I’ve got to find out what’s going on.” I said, “Would you like me to go with you?” and he said, “Yes please.”

I got a Sten gun and he took a Tommy gun. We took about two paces and there was a burst of machine gun fire. I was shot in the right arm and that was it, my soldiering was over.

Was your injury serious enough for you to be sent home?

Oh yes, because it completely severed the brachial artery, which is a main artery, and nicked the medium nerve. If it had happened today I daresay they would have been able to get the nerve back with microsurgery, but they

couldn’t do it in those days. My arm was useless and I lost a hell of a lot of blood. They flew me to England, landed near Swindon and I ended up at the Royal Hospital in Wolverhampton. I was six miles (9.6 kilometres) from home!

How long were you fighting in Normandy before you were wounded?

About a couple of hours, but in that time I shot up a patrol of about eight men. It’s nothing to boast about because it’s a bloody awful thing. You had to take somebody’s life or injure them – that’s what it amounted to.

Was it a relief to be invalided out of the war?

I can’t honestly say that. I would have much preferred to have seen the war out, because in a way I almost felt that I let my pals down. I suppose it’s a silly attitude to take, but that was me.

POST-WAR FRIENDSHIP

How did you meet Karl?

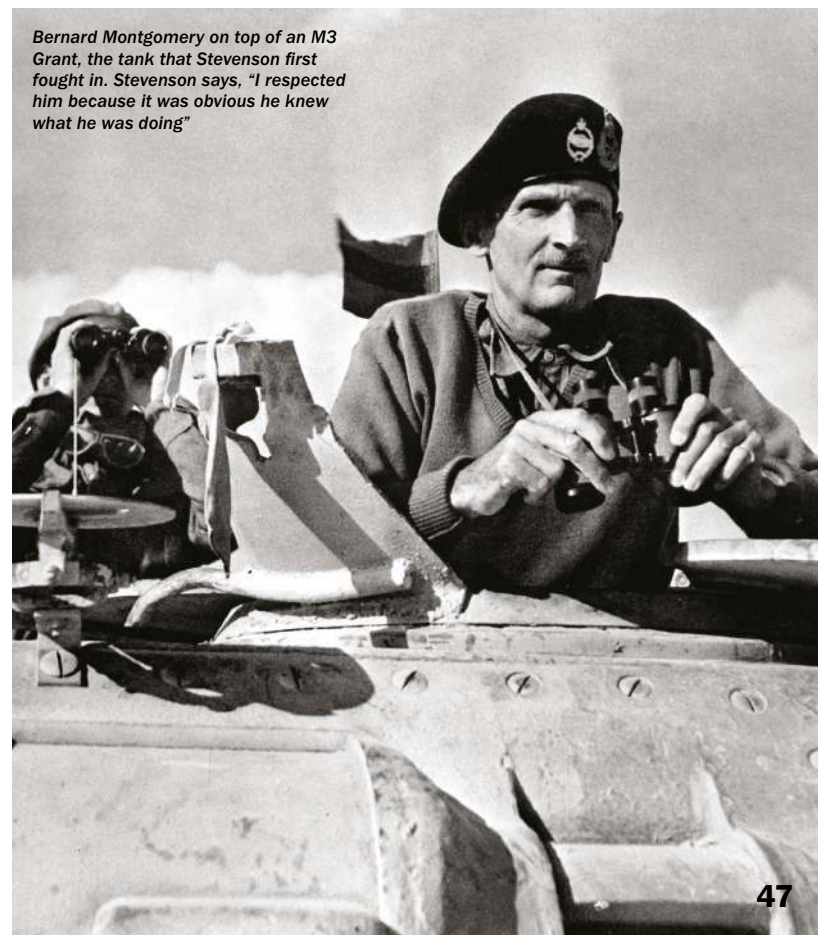
I met him in near Nottingham about ten years ago at the Sherwood Rangers reunion, and we hit it off. It was interesting to meet your old enemy but it’s nothing strange. Why shouldn’t we be friends? They were doing what they were told, like I was doing. There were some really vile Nazis but they were in the minority. I never came across the SS or anything like that.

What can your friendship with Karl teach people about reconciliation?

He was doing his job and I was doing my job. At the end of the day that’s it really. There can never be any excuse for war. At the time I suppose it was a grand adventure. When you’re 17 you don’t give a damn for anybody, but in my more mature years I see things a bit more clearly. If you don’t get some smidgen of wisdom with your 90-odd years then there’s no hope.

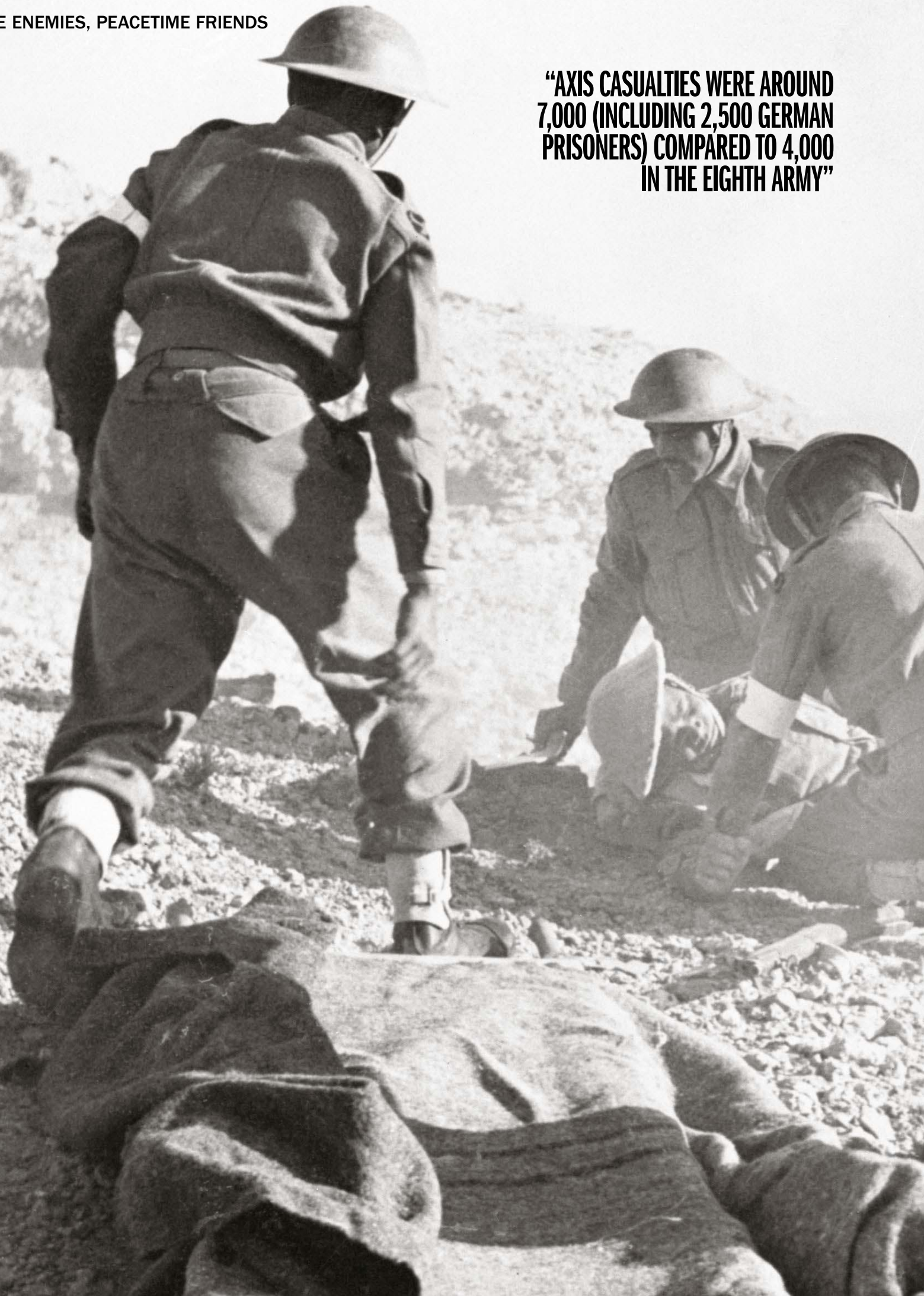


An American M4 Sherman tank races through the El Guettar valley in Tunisia, 1943. Stevenson spent most of his war fighting in Shermans in various roles



Bernard Montgomery on top of an M3 Grant, the tank that Stevenson first fought in. Stevenson says, “I respected him because it was obvious he knew what he was doing”

**"AXIS CASUALTIES WERE AROUND
7,000 (INCLUDING 2,500 GERMAN
PRISONERS) COMPARED TO 4,000
IN THE EIGHTH ARMY"**



BATTLE OF THE MARETH LINE

EIGHTH ARMY FOUGHT ONE OF ITS LAST MAJOR BATTLES IN NORTH AFRICA AGAINST HEAVILY DEFENDED GERMAN-ITALIAN POSITIONS IN SOUTHERN TUNISIA

The Mareth Line was a system of fortifications built by the French before WWII that aimed to defend Tunisia from Fascist Italy. It was dominated by the Atlas Mountains, and the line ran for 35 kilometres (22 miles) between Wadi Zigzaou and the Matmata Hills.

By March 1943 Rommel had left North Africa and the overall Axis commander was the Italian general Giovanni Messe. A combined German-Italian force occupied the Mareth Line, but opposing them was Bernard Montgomery, who declared, "We will not stop or let up until Tunis has been captured." Eighth Army was the numerically superior force in troops, supplies and, most importantly, tanks, but the battle lasted for over a fortnight between 16-31 March.

Stevenson and Koenig's own unwitting encounter took place at a crucial engagement at the Tebega Gap. The 'Gap' was a low mountain pass in the northwest of the Matmata Hills, and Montgomery ordered the New Zealand Corps (along with British and French reinforcements) to encircle the Axis forces that were fighting the main Allied assault.

An Allied infantry and armoured assault broke through the Tebega Gap during 'Operation Supercharge II', and this success was a key part of the Allied victory at the Mareth Line. Axis casualties were around 7,000 (including 2,500 German prisoners) compared to 4,000 in Eighth Army. Although Axis forces retreated in relatively good order, it was now clear that the North Africa Campaign was ending.



A British 25-pounder field gun fires at night during an assault on the Mareth Line, 30 March 1943



Second Lieutenant Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa Ngarimu was killed in action on 27 March 1943 during the fighting at the Tebega Gap. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross and became the first Maori to receive the decoration

Indian stretcher-bearers rush to the aid of a wounded Gurkha during a break in fighting at the Mareth Line





KARL KOENIG GEFREITER (LANCE CORPORAL) PANZER REGIMENT 5

Born in Saxony and brought up in Hamburg, Koenig came from a military family. His father received Saxony's highest decoration during WWI, while his grandfather received the same award during the Franco-Prussian War.

Koenig served in the 21st Panzer Division and was a candidate for officer training in the Afrika Korps. He first experienced combat in a Panzer IV tank at the Tebega Gap and went on to fight in the Tunisian mountains against US forces. Koenig was captured near the coast in May 1943 and was a POW in the USA and England until 1947.

A KEEN VOLUNTEER

When did you join the Wehrmacht?

It was in March 1942. I was afraid of not being able to participate because I was so young, and even went down into the city twice a week to talk to army officials.

We were all volunteers, and it was a question of conviction, honour or whatever you might call it. Before we went into the Wehrmacht we had been in the Hitler Youth. We were trained to be honest, chivalrous and brave, and we took lessons once a week where we learned about Frederick the Great and German history. The other day was for sports, and we did a lot of

those, which was very good because I benefitted from this hard training.

We volunteered because we thought it was our duty. We did not believe that we were guilty for 1914-18. We thought the verdict of Versailles was a real crime and the root of all evil. When we got into the second war we were all convinced that we were right in defending our interests and country.

You could apply to be a fighter pilot, tank man, paratrooper, submariner, anything. I wanted to go into the cavalry at first but realised it was not right to use animals to fight our cause. I also thought they were not decisive anymore in mechanised war, so I immediately applied for tanks.

My mother was strictly against it. She wrote many letters and tried to persuade me not to do it. I even remember that she wrote, "Why don't you go into the coastal artillery?" That would have been shameful for me to remain in the rear. It was not for me or anyone else. We were not built or educated like that.

How did you join the Afrika Korps?

We were told that the British and Russians were tough opponents and that the Russians were cruel towards prisoners. These thoughts played a role in how people decided what front

they wanted to be on. Of course, to go to Africa sounded like an adventure. We had never been travelling and Africa sounded very attractive.

However, we had no say in the matter because our medical examinations dictated whether that you were capable of fighting in the tropics. We had one regiment, which was Panzer Regiment 5, in Africa, and our counterpart, Panzer Regiment 6, was in Russia.

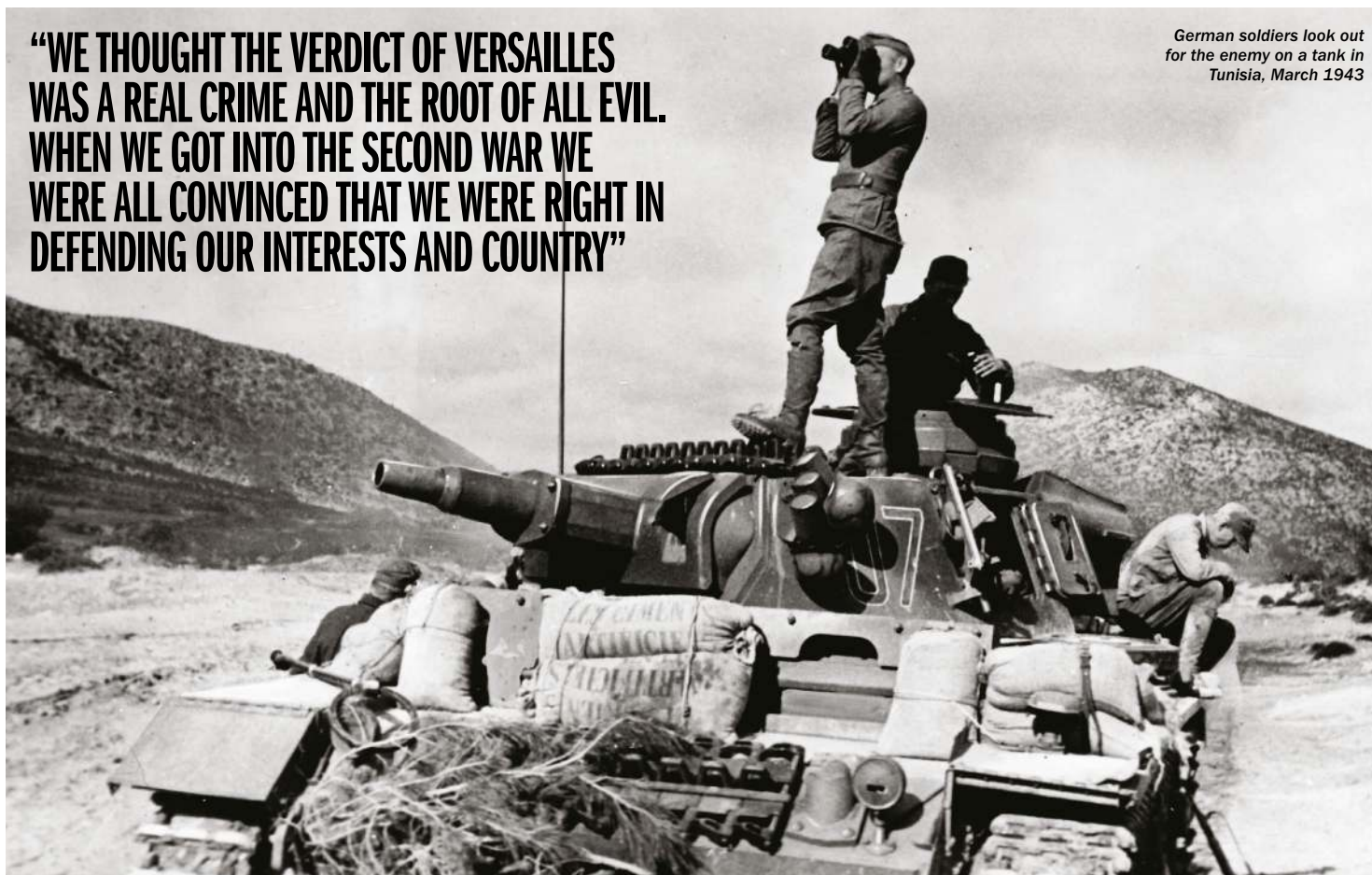
One aristocratic friend was the great-nephew of the [former] chancellor Leo von Caprivi and he was my buddy in Africa. His great-uncle was not quite as successful as Bismarck, but he was a good fellow. Ultimately, it did not matter if you were nobility or not. All that counted was efficiency, performance and loyalty. We were all given the same chance.

When did you arrive in North Africa?

On 14 March 1943 we finally got the possibility to go in a Junkers 52 over the Mediterranean. We went by train through Italy and were not able to fly across immediately and had to wait in a camp, which was next to an aerodrome. It was attacked by British bombers, but we knew exactly when they were coming.

The Italian fighters left the airport and flew to the left, which meant that the British were

"WE THOUGHT THE VERDICT OF VERSAILLES WAS A REAL CRIME AND THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL. WHEN WE GOT INTO THE SECOND WAR WE WERE ALL CONVINCED THAT WE WERE RIGHT IN DEFENDING OUR INTERESTS AND COUNTRY"



German soldiers look out for the enemy on a tank in Tunisia, March 1943

"MY MOTHER WAS STRICTLY AGAINST IT. SHE WROTE MANY LETTERS AND TRIED TO PERSUADE ME NOT TO DO IT. I EVEN REMEMBER THAT SHE WROTE, 'WHY DON'T YOU GO INTO THE COASTAL ARTILLERY?' THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN SHAMEFUL FOR ME TO REMAIN IN THE REAR"

Karl Koenig as a Gefreiter in Panzer Regiment 5. The Totenkopf (skull and crossbones) on his collar was the unit insignia of Panzer regiments in the German Heer (Army) although they are often confused with the SS

attacking from the right side. When they had bombed the field and went away the Italian fighters returned to the airfield!

The Italians even sabotaged us. When I was at Palermo waiting for the air transport we were ordered to go down to the beach, because German Junkers aircraft had come down with water in the gasoline. There were three over the sea and one on the beach. We helped to build a stretch from where they could start again.

Can you imagine? We were sent to Italy to defend the Italian colonies and to fight for them. At the same time they sabotaged us by putting water in the petrol. That was incredible.

What was your opinion of the Italian soldiers?

I'm not saying they were all cowards, but unfortunately I have to say so about a good part of the Italians. They had some good units like the Trieste tank division, which had a good reputation. In fact, I admired those Italian tankers because they had to fight in tanks that were no good at all.

On the other hand, a lot of them did not want to fight and they perhaps saw no reason to. For example, the enlisted men didn't have the same food as the NCOs or the officers. Such a thing would not have been possible in Germany.

On one occasion in North Africa I met some Italian infantry with an Italian machine gun. I was interested in arms and asked one to show me how it worked. The bridge was rusted

and he couldn't even use it. They were supposed to fight for themselves but they were not even able to look after their weapons. Maybe this was one isolated incident, but I shall never forget that.

PANZERS, HURRICANES AND THE TEBEGA GAP

What was your role in the Panzer IV tank?

I was sent to Company 8, which was the heavy company with a 75mm long-range, long-barrelled gun. As a newcomer, and therefore the weakest link in the crew, I was a loader and had to replace my predecessor. When you are on the way to becoming an officer you have to start at the bottom.

You had to load the gun and see that you had the right sort of ammunition and replenish it. The armament of the Panzer IV was an MG 34 machine gun in the turret, a 75mm cannon, and the wireless operator had a machine gun in the front. I had to see that we had the right ammunition at the right moment, because you had high explosives against lorries, infantry etc. and you had the armour-piercing ammunition to fight tanks.

What was your opinion of the Panzer IV as a fighting vehicle?

I was glad to be in it because at that time it was the best we had in Africa. They did have some Tigers at the end but I never saw them,



Above: A wounded British soldier shares a cigarette with a wounded German prisoner during the Battle of the Mareth Line, c.22-24 March 1943

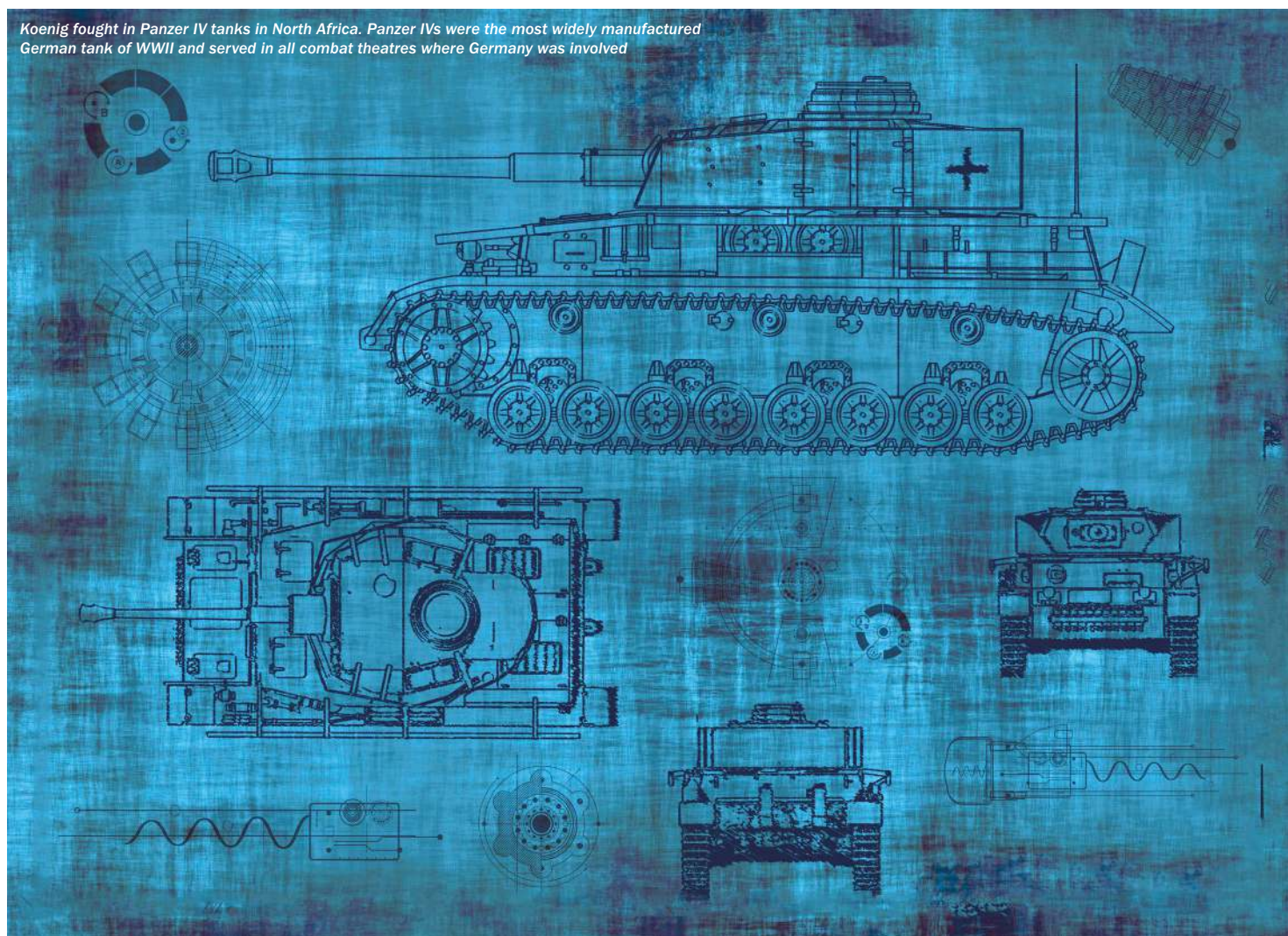
and I would have welcomed to be in them. It had an 88mm gun and thick armour. We had 14mm armour at the front, and that's nothing compared to what you use nowadays.

In North Africa we even used the Panzer III with a 50mm gun because it had better armour, and some would have preferred to be in the Panzer III. However, the penetration of the 50mm gun was not to be compared at all with the 75mm.

What were the German objectives at the Tebega Gap?

We had to hold this gap if possible because the British had done a clever move. They came using a left hook manoeuvre and we wanted to hold the Mareth Line. It was not a line as such but a series of fortifications. However, the

Koenig fought in Panzer IV tanks in North Africa. Panzer IVs were the most widely manufactured German tank of WWII and served in all combat theatres where Germany was involved





Nazi propaganda depicts tanks at the front in Tunisia, 15 February 1943. By this stage the Mareth Line was the last Axis fortified defensive line in North Africa

Tebega Gap was a natural defence with some trenches. There were some hills where you could hide a little bit, but you had to go up the hill to see the enemy and shoot.

It was quite open country and there was no way to hide, except for a little while behind a little slope. On the right side there were mountains, but we were not there, we were in the opening of this gap.

What are your memories of the battle?

The first days were my baptism of fire. At first we fought against the Sherwoods, tank against tank. Then our engines had trouble and the next day we heard a radio message that said we were going to be attacked by planes.

They came from three directions. First, we took cover: we were rushing around the tank to get into a lee that was covered. I was green and wanted to prove myself but nobody was fighting then. I said, "God damn it, I have to do something!" so I took out a machine gun.

The rear of the tank was facing the Hurricanes at that stage so I went up onto the cupola and starting firing. The angle was different the closer the Hurricanes came so I stood up and fired with the machine gun on my hip until I stumbled and fell off. I fell off the tank with the gun in my arms and let the trigger go so I wouldn't hit any of my people.

On the ground there was a small heap of sand right next to the tank. I fired the gun from there and the driver was feeding me ammunition. I couldn't get the damn planes down because they were so many and they kept coming in waves.

At one time I was standing up, and the plane that had fired at us was passing by and I could see the pilot's face because he was so low.

"I WAS GREEN AND WANTED TO PROVE MYSELF BUT NOBODY WAS FIGHTING THEN. I SAID, 'GOD DAMN IT, I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!'"

None of them came down, and I later learned that these Hurricanes were armour-plated underneath, so it would have been a miracle if I had shot him down with a machine gun.

It was a bit of a stupid idea of mine to try it, but I wanted to prove myself and do something to stop them.

How did it feel to be attacked by Hurricanes?

It was very intense. After I had been firing at the plane our lieutenant gave us the order to get underneath the tank. We jumped under and he somehow sensed that there were two artillery shots coming in our direction. One landed directly on the engine deck and we were all underneath our tank. When we were hit I could feel that the tank was coming a little bit down on me.

After this we went out to look at the damage. The engine was burning and the trouble was we had some stacks of ammunition in the rear. They could have exploded, but our driver got a fire extinguisher out and managed to extinguish it.

Where were you during the battle in relation to Graham Stevenson?

Graham was on the other side of this hill. He cannot have seen our position because we were in the rear of a little slope. He must

have been informed about the air attack that we were under, but he and the others broke through. The Sherwood Rangers were on their right side while my company was on our left side, so they were directly opposite us. At that time my tank had been towed away to the repair shop, so when they came through I had already gone. There was another time when my regiment fought the Sherwoods, but I could not participate because the damn tank wasn't working. It was pure fate.

What were fighting conditions like inside a Panzer during a battle?

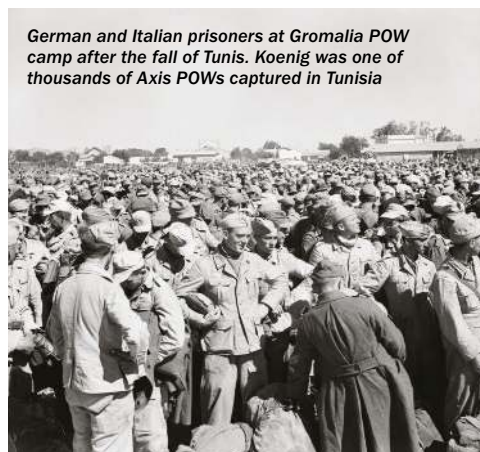
It had a crew of five: commander, gunner, loader, radio operator and driver. It would get hot, especially when you fired the cannon because there was some heat generated by the gun.

When you are a loader you only have a small slit on the right side of the turret, through which you can see a little bit to the right but not to the front. You just waited for what would happen. You heard the shells go by and they made a funny gurgling sound.

It was not a pleasant feeling if you couldn't see, but that is the fate of the loader. All the others could see and look out, but you were almost blind. It was an unpleasant mission.

I heard swishing noises and you had to wait for fate – whether you were going to be hit, die or not. That's it. You were exposed because the Panzers were up front. In the desert it was open country most of the time and there was no cover.

From the beginning it depended who was quicker: their gunner or your own. Nowadays you can't miss anymore. Today it is incredible because it is so accurate and computerised, but in those days the gunner had to be damned



German and Italian prisoners at Gromalia POW camp after the fall of Tunis. Koenig was one of thousands of Axis POWs captured in Tunisia



Koenig and Stevenson salute the fallen at La Cambe German War Cemetery, Normandy. As an honorary member of the Sherwood Rangers, Koenig proudly wears their beret as a symbol of friendship

good and fast. It all depended on him and some depended on the commander directing him quickly enough and in the right direction.

CAPTURE

What were the circumstances of your capture?

We got to a small place near Raf Raf and our captain dismissed us and said, "It's over. You are free to do whatever, to escape or wait." We must have spent three days waiting on the coast for E-boats but nothing came. I did see two E-boats in the distance coming towards the shore and I tried to reach them, but they went out to sea again. That was the greatest disappointment.

Suddenly a formation of British bombers came over just after we took our pistols apart. I ran into a little olive grove and threw myself in a small fold so I was covered on one side. The bombers came towards me and there was a 'Boom! Boom! Boom!' just before me and after, but I was unscathed. I cursed and said, "God damn it!" I thought the war was over for me, but they were still operating.

The next morning an American truck came to pick up prisoners. It was before 13 May 1943, but the war was over.

A 'GENTLEMAN'S WAR'

What was your opinion of Rommel and Montgomery as commanders?

I held Rommel in the highest esteem. He was always up front and not hiding behind like many other generals. I never saw him unfortunately, but he was always with his men and was very brave. It was such a crime that Hitler compelled him to be poisoned or be tried because he was on the side of those who wanted to end the war.

I can't judge Montgomery, but he must have been a capable man. Of course, for him it was much easier to win against the Afrika Korps because we didn't have enough supplies. There was also the American-British alliance coming in from two sides that enormously outnumbered us. They had all the necessary petrol, ammunition, food etc. that we couldn't even dream of.

To what extent do you think the North Africa Campaign was a 'gentleman's war'?

The war between the Afrika Korps and the Eighth Army was a very unusual thing. We came to a gentlemen's agreement with the British, which sounds strange, that we were not going to shoot crews while they were bailing out of tanks.

You might say, 'What a stupid thing' because if they were not wounded they would go into the

"I FELT SO BETRAYED. I HAD FOUGHT FOR THE MAN, WAS READY TO DIE FOR HIM AND WAS ON THE BRINK OF IT SEVERAL TIMES. EVERYTHING HAD BEEN IN VAIN AND MY COMRADES WERE DEAD"

next tank and fire against their opponents, but that's how it was. However, the Americans had no such agreements with us and they fired with everything they had.

We never wanted to fight the British. In Hamburg we were called 'Anglophiles' because we were a well-connected port and the British were like cousins.

How did you feel when you found out about the Nazis' crimes in Europe during your captivity?

In North Africa we didn't know what they had done with the Jews in the concentration camps. It was hushed up of course, because otherwise we wouldn't have fought. I was so disgusted.

I was lucky to have been in the Afrika Korps because nobody pointed a finger at them. However, for the Germans, what had happened in the concentration camps was our guilt.

When I was younger I had a photo of Hitler as a soldier with the Iron Cross. I said, "Yes, you are going to free us of the shame of Versailles, when they humiliated us and took away part of my country." Hitler was the man who would save us from this. That is why we all believed in him and fought with full conviction. This was done not knowing what was happening to the Jews. When I heard it I got so f***ing mad and it ended my youth. We are a proud country and he ruined it.

I felt so betrayed. I had fought for the man, was ready to die for him and was on the brink of it several times. Everything had been in vain and my comrades were dead.

I don't feel personally guilty for it though. My family had Jewish friends and we even took in the wife of a Jewish friend who had committed suicide. I am a cosmopolitan. The only matter is whether a person has a good, conscientious heart. Their race or position in life matters not.

BEFRIENDING THE BRITISH

Why did you decide to contact the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry Regimental Association in 1991?

I reached out to find the Sherwood Rangers because when I came back to Germany we [German soldiers] were considered as scum. I then said that I would find those British who fought against me because I thought they were honourable. I found them and they became my closest friends, especially Ken Ewing, who was in the same tank as Graham. Ken became like a brother.

When I was invited for the first time I went to Bayeux in my German tank beret. I was standing there, a bit unclear as to what would happen, and said, "What am I going to do?" but they said, "You're one of us." So I joined their ranks. I was on the parade with the Sherwood Rangers and Canadian pilots, so that was my first meeting. After that I became a member of their association without making a declaration, but it was set. It was an honour to be accepted and I was proud of it.

The papers wrote about us and the title was "Respect and Honour". After that I went to England every year, where I was at regimental dinners, and in London when they had a memorial day.

When did you first meet Graham?

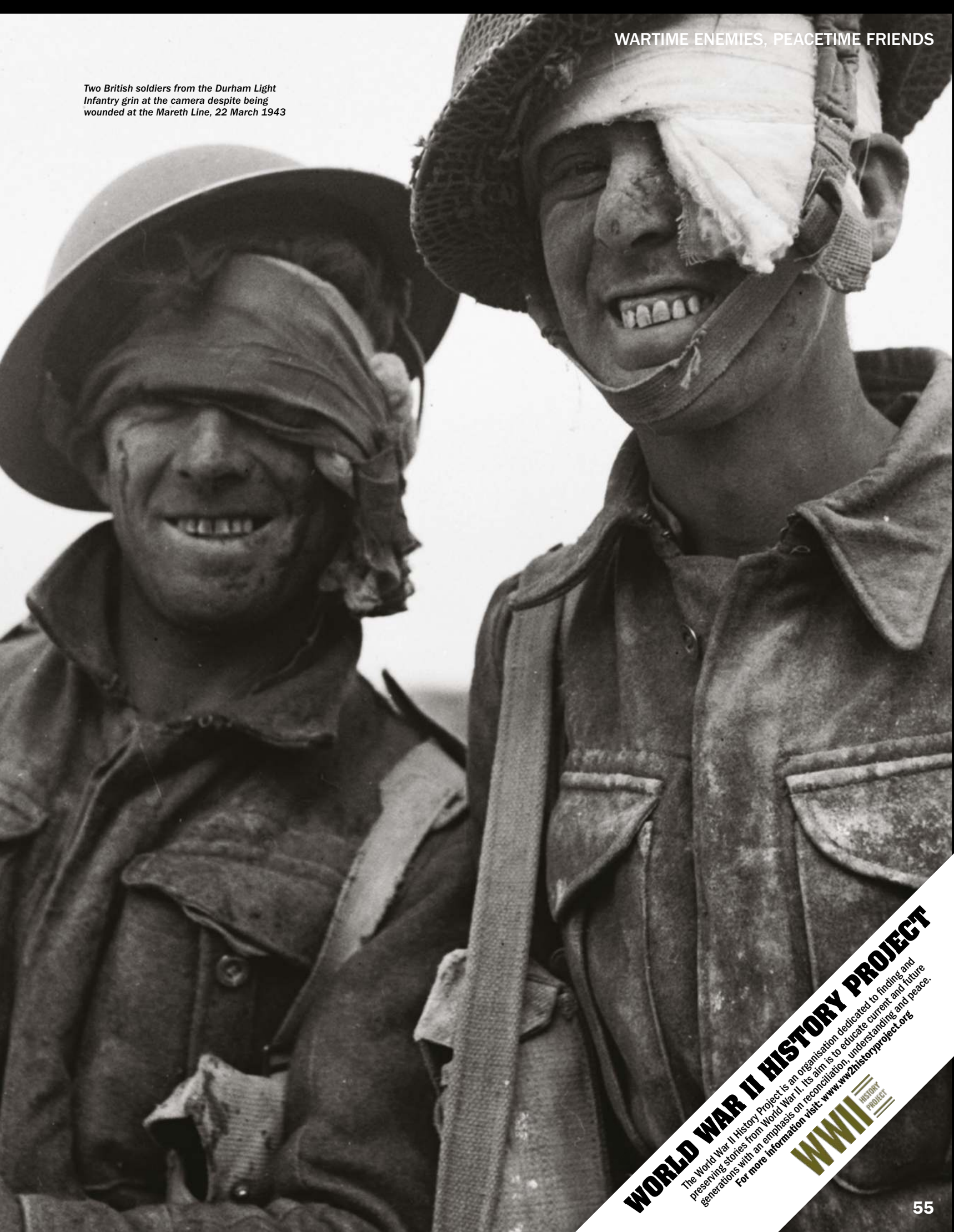
He came a bit later because he had not known about the association. I liked him and he was a mate of my buddy Ken so it was a clear thing. I was with Graham when we went to the German cemetery in England.

What do you think your friendship with your former enemies can teach future generations?

That is an important question. I hope that setting an example like this might make people approach others with mutual respect and try to understand them. It is so important for peace. It is possible between former enemies or opponents to become friends and to reconsider everything. We are all human beings.

It is understandable that a soldier must obey an order, whether he likes it or not. But I will not accept that we must do something against the law, against human behaviour. That is what I want to convey to the next generations: to be respectful, decent and honest. Graham and I are the last ones in our group but we must pass on the message for as long as possible.

Two British soldiers from the Durham Light Infantry grin at the camera despite being wounded at the Mareth Line, 22 March 1943



WORLD WAR II HISTORY PROJECT
The World War II History Project is an organisation dedicated to finding and preserving stories from World War II. Its aim is to educate current and future generations with an emphasis on reconciliation, understanding and peace.
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Great Battles

BATTLE OF WAGRAM

Napoleon's Grande Armée faced a worthy adversary in Archduke Charles I and his revamped Austrian army



WORDS WILLIAM E. WELSH

French light horsemen of the Imperial Guard launch a devastating attack against Austrian light cavalry



— OPPOSING FORCES —



FRENCH & ALLIED ARMIES

vs

AUSTRIAN ARMY



LEADER Emperor Napoleon
INFANTRY 190,500
GUNS 617

LEADER Archduke Charles I
INFANTRY 137,700
GUNS 414

EASTERN AUSTRIA 5-6 JULY 1809

Shells from French guns screamed over the heads of the Austrian cannoneers and musketeers and slammed into the village of Wagram on the evening of 5 July 1809. Yellow and orange flames licked skyward as the buildings caught fire. When the French guns fell silent, Saxon troops of Emperor Napoleon's Grande Armée splashed through the Russbach stream and climbed the slopes leading towards the Austrian position. As the Saxons reached the first line of the Austrian army, they fired crashing volleys that drove the first line back against the second line.

“NAPOLEON’S SAXON TROOPS HAD NEARLY SUCCEEDED IN PIERCING THE AUSTRIAN LINE ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM”

The Saxons fought their way into Wagram, but their progress was soon halted by a wall of Austrian fire. When Saxon reinforcements arrived, they mistakenly fired into the back of their comrades. Fired on from the front by enemies and the rear by friends, the Saxons in the village broke under the strain. They did not stop until they ran headlong into the bayonets of the French Imperial Guard who formed up to halt the Saxon flight.

Napoleon's Saxon troops had nearly succeeded in piercing the Austrian line on the first day of the Battle of Wagram. But after they retreated, the French emperor had nothing to show for four hours of fighting that ended at around 11pm. Napoleon and his worthy foe, Archduke Charles, both drafted orders for morning attacks.

Austrians thirst for revenge

Four years after Napoleon's great victories over the Austrians at Ulm and an Austro-Russian army at Austerlitz in 1805, the Austrians seethed with hatred for the French. They resented having lost Venetia, Istria and Dalmatia to Napoleon through the Treaty of Pressburg. The Austrians also resented the replacement of the Austrian-controlled Holy

Roman Empire with the French-controlled Confederation of the Rhine.

The Austrians took heart when the Spanish revolted against the occupying French army in 1808, and when French forces suffered several defeats in battle to both Spanish and Anglo-Portuguese forces.

As the Austrians geared up to go to war again with Napoleon, they sought aid from their former allies. Although Great Britain agreed to furnish funds, it was not interested in furnishing troops to assist the Austrians. Nevertheless, the two nations had forged an alliance, and the ensuing conflict was known as the War of the Fifth Coalition. Russia technically was a French ally, and Tsar Alexander was not yet ready to go to war again with the French.

The Austrians had confidence in their army, based in large part on the sweeping reforms that Archduke Charles had carried out over the past few years to put the Austrian army on par with the French army. Charles had instituted a corps system similar to that of the French, trained the army to concentrate in large masses to deliver powerful attacks, overhauled its supply system and modernised its artillery.

France's army had evolved from a primarily citizen army into a professional army that



General Antoine de Lasalle led French cuirassiers against Austrian infantry, in an attack that cost him his life on the second day of the battle

"THE BATTLE OF ASPERN-ESSLING MARKED THE FIRST TIME THAT NAPOLEON WAS DEFEATED IN A PITCHED BATTLE"



included a substantial number of German and Polish troops. Specifically, Marshal Francois Joseph Lefebvre's VII Corps comprised 30,000 Bavarians, and Marshal Jean Bernadotte's 18,000-man IX Corps was predominantly Saxon.

On 9 April Archduke Charles crossed the Inn River into Bavaria. When Napoleon learned that the Austrians had invaded Bavaria, he made preparations to leave Paris to take command of his army. On his orders, French forces in Germany and adjoining regions converged immediately on southern Bavaria. Napoleon arrived at the battlefield along the Danube River on 17 April. He subsequently defeated Charles on 21-22 April in the Battle of Eckmühl.

Following his defeat at Eckmühl, Charles retreated to Bohemia to refit. This move exposed Vienna, which Napoleon occupied on 13 May. Charles subsequently emerged with his army from Bohemia and took up a position on the Marchfeld, the expansive plain on the opposite side of the Danube from the Austrian capital.

Napoleon soon began moving troops across the river to engage the Austrians. He used the island of Lobau and adjacent smaller river islands as stepping stones to get his army across the wide Danube, utilising pontoon bridges and hastily constructed wooden bridges. On 21-22 May the Austrians defeated the French in heavy fighting in the villages of Aspern and Essling. During the battle, the Austrians sent debris and fireboats downstream in an effort to wreck Napoleon's bridges. The tactic, which was aided by rising waters during springtime, compelled Napoleon to withdraw to the south bank, as without secure bridges he could neither supply nor reinforce his troops on the north bank.

The Battle of Aspern-Essling marked the first time that Napoleon was defeated in a pitched battle. The Austrian victory gave encouragement to those subjugated by the French. The French emperor had no intention of

quitting his campaign against Austria, because if he were to retreat it would show that he could be defeated strategically as well as tactically. Napoleon therefore resolved that he would vanquish the Austrians on the Marchfeld to show Europe that the Grande Armée was still a force to be feared.

Napoleon strikes

Napoleon decided to cross the Danube again at the same location but knew he had to strengthen his bridges. The French drove piles into the river upstream of their new bridges to protect them from floating obstacles. Napoleon also established a small force of gunboats to disrupt Austrian spoiling attacks conducted on the river. By the end of June the French had stockpiled supplies and ammunition on Lobau island to support another offensive move.

Meanwhile, Archduke Charles was embroiled in a heated debate with his generals whether to contest another French crossing near the river bank or whether to deploy further back on higher ground. Charles favoured the former tactic, and the generals favoured the latter. The archduke ultimately heeded the advice of his generals and issued orders for his army to deploy on the high ground.

"THE FRENCH EMPEROR HAD NO INTENTION OF QUITTING HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST AUSTRIA, BECAUSE IF HE WERE TO RETREAT IT WOULD SHOW THAT HE COULD BE DEFEATED STRATEGICALLY AS WELL AS TACTICALLY"

When French forces began crossing to the north bank on the morning of 5 July a heavy rainfall masked their movements. Napoleon was on hand to urge the first of the forces to hurry across a dozen pontoon bridges, leading from the east side of the island of Lobau to the north shore. The first forces to cross were those commanded by Napoleon's most experienced commanders: Davout, Masséna and Oudinot. Once the II, III and IV Corps at the front had a stable position, Napoleon sent Prince Eugène's Army of Italy (the V and VI Corps) and Bernadotte's Saxon IX Corps across in the early afternoon. In the late afternoon, the Imperial Guard and cavalry reserve crossed. This gave Napoleon sufficient forces for a general attack, even though it was growing late in the day.

Archduke Charles had deployed his left wing, consisting of the Austrian II, III and IV Corps, behind the Russbach facing southwest. The infantry of the Austrian left wing held a particularly strong position on an escarpment behind the Russbach. The steep banks of the narrow stream were lined with tangled foliage that was unsuitable for cavalry action and precluded the passage of artillery. The Austrian right wing, which was composed of the III, V, VI Corps, Reserve Corps and Reserve Grenadier Division, was deployed in front of the Bissam Heights facing southeast.

Fearing that Archduke John might arrive from Pressburg with Austrian reinforcements, Napoleon decided to launch an attack against the Russbach line in the hope of a quick victory. The French emperor issued orders at 6pm for his right wing to assail the Austrian left wing. Marshal Davout would attack towards Markgrafneusiedl, Marshal Oudinot and Prince Eugène's corps would attack towards Baumersdorf, and Bernadotte would attack towards Wagram. It took the French forces an hour to get into position. At 7pm, French

Napoleon, who held the interior lines at Wagram, directed the battle from a position at Raasdorf



GREAT BATTLES

batteries began firing on the Austrian positions to soften them up for the infantry assault.

When the guns stopped, the three divisions that constituted Oudinot's II Corps surged forward. The divisions attacked abreast across a three-kilometre (two-mile) front. Grey-uniformed Jägers and a battalion of the Archduke Charles Legion had taken up positions in the village of Baumersdorf, and they blunted the force of Oudinot's second division, so he sent the 10th Light Infantry and the 57th Line regiments from his third division to carry out a flank attack against the village from the east. The flank attack failed to rattle the crack Austrian force in the village, which tenaciously held its ground. Elements of the 10th then stormed the escarpment and ran into a wall of fire from General Wenzel von Buresch's brigade of the Austrian II Corps. Moving forward to assist the Austrian infantry were 500 green-jacketed horsemen of the crack Vincent Chevauleger, led by the corps commander Friedrich of Hohenzollern. Their attack sent Oudinot's dispirited soldiers scurrying south.

Next into action were Prince Eugène's V and VI Corps and Bernadotte's Saxon IX Corps. General Pierre-Louis Dupas's mixed division of French and Saxons spearheaded the attack. They were followed by one division from the V Corps and two divisions from the VI Corps. Napoleon had instructed Eugène and Bernadotte to capture Wagram so as to drive a wedge between the two Austrian wings.

The attack initially went well, with the Saxons securing the village of Aderklaa and reaching Wagram while Eugène's troops grappled with the Austrian I Corps men on the top of the escarpment. The regiments of General Jean Lamarque's division fought exceptionally well, driving the Austrians off before they became engaged in a slugfest with the men of the 35th Infantry Regiment. While the Austrians on the escarpment sought to hold their ground, Dupas's men angled west and fought their way into Wagram. Austrian I Corps commander Bellegarde personally rallied his troops on the escarpment. Austrian heavy musketry drove back Lamarque's men, and Archduke Charles arrived to help Bellegarde rally his troops. On the opposite end of the French line, Davout's attack made no headway.

The second day

Both army commanders resolved to continue the fight on 6 July. The availability of fresh troops from General Auguste de Marmont's XI Corps and General Karl Philipp Wrede's Bavarian Division of the VII Corps gave Napoleon the superior force on the second day of battle.

The helmet of a French cuirassier. French cuirassiers were elite heavy, armoured cavalry and were famed for their powerful, impetuous charges into the enemy

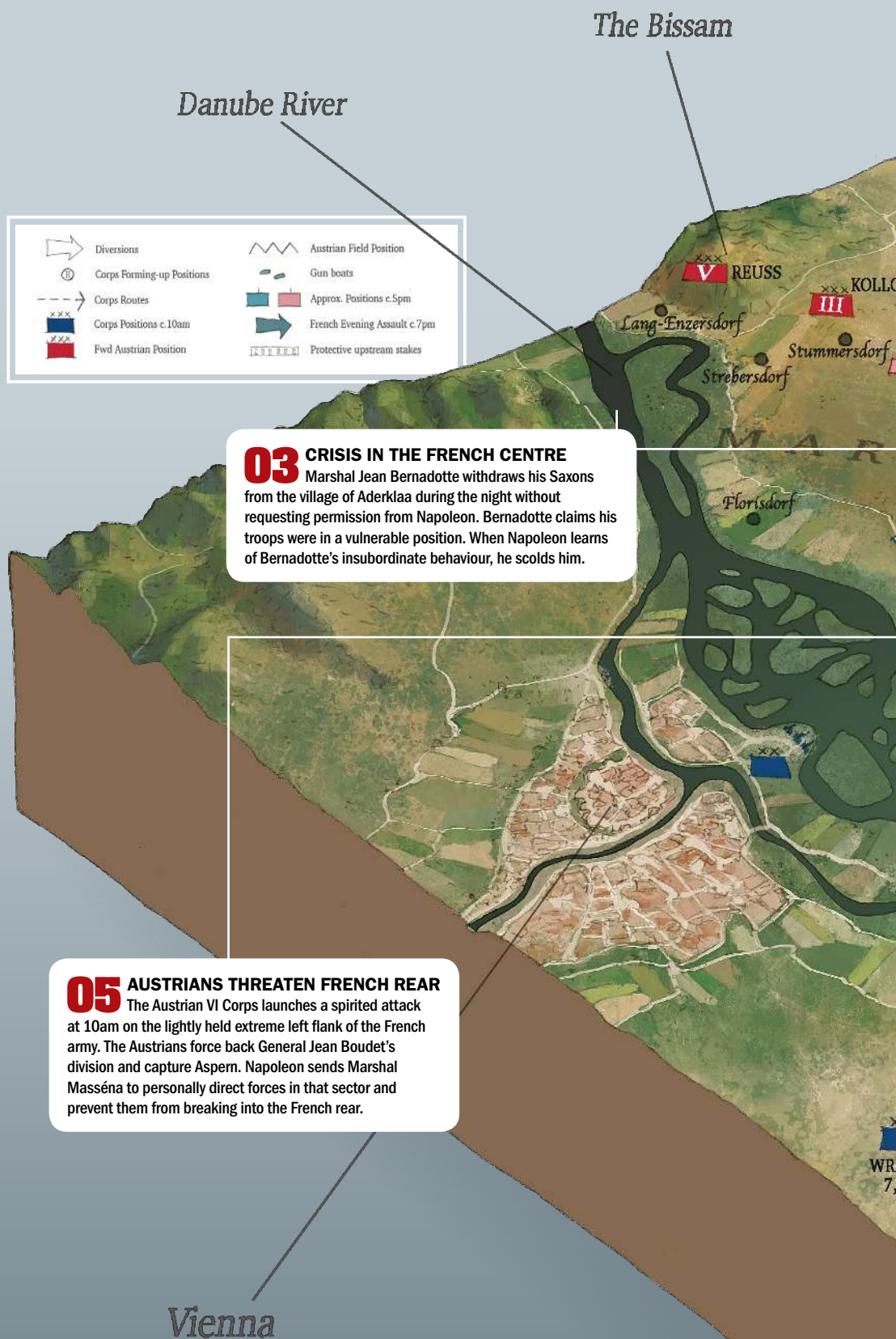


03 CRISIS IN THE FRENCH CENTRE

Marshal Jean Bernadotte withdraws his Saxons from the village of Aderklaa during the night without requesting permission from Napoleon. Bernadotte claims his troops were in a vulnerable position. When Napoleon learns of Bernadotte's insubordinate behaviour, he scolds him.

05 AUSTRIANS THREATEN FRENCH REAR

The Austrian VI Corps launches a spirited attack at 10am on the lightly held extreme left flank of the French army. The Austrians force back General Jean Boudet's division and capture Aspern. Napoleon sends Marshal Masséna to personally direct forces in that sector and prevent them from breaking into the French rear.



Great Battles

BATTLE OF WAGRAM

08 AUSTRIAN ARMY RETREATS INTACT

Archduke Charles witnesses the dislodging of his left wing from the escarpment behind the Russbach stream. He orders a phased withdrawal to the north, which begins at 2.30pm. The Austrians depart intact, thwarting Napoleon's plan to completely destroy the Austrian army.

02 ARCHDUKE CHARLES RALLIES THE AUSTRIANS

Beginning at 7pm on 5 July, the French right wing attacks the Austrians defending the Russbach line. When the French seem on the verge of gaining possession of the key location, Archduke Charles leads a counterattack that restores stability to the threatened Austrian right. He suffers a minor wound in the shoulder.

06 CAVALRY CLASH

An attempt by the Austrian hussars to get behind the French right flank at noon on 6 July is thwarted near the village of Obersiebenbrunn, north of the Russbach stream, by elements of two French dragoon divisions and one light cavalry division.

04 AUSTRIANS THREATEN FRENCH RIGHT FLANK

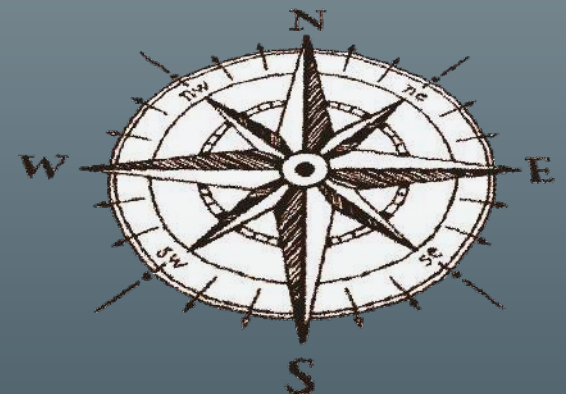
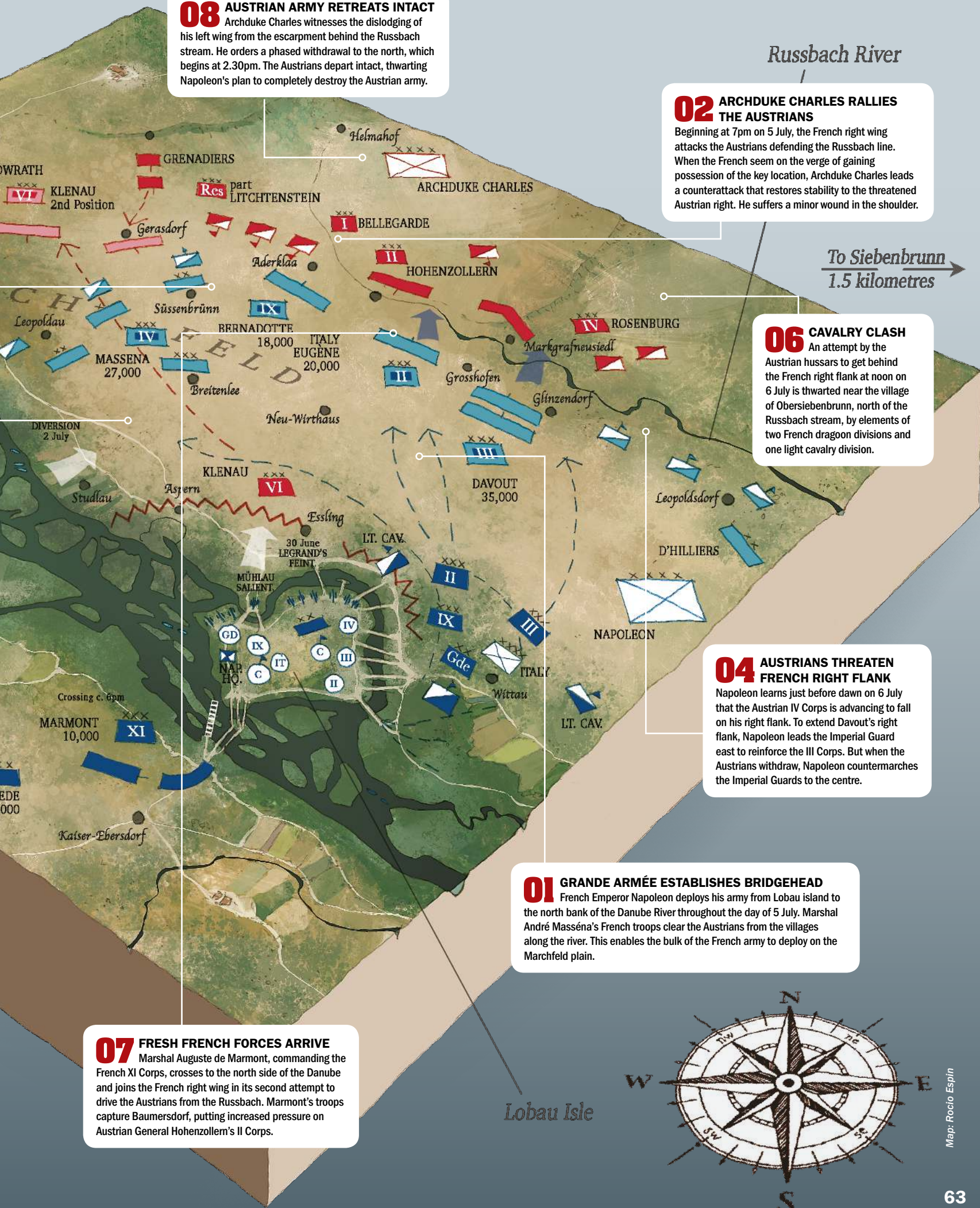
Napoleon learns just before dawn on 6 July that the Austrian IV Corps is advancing to fall on his right flank. To extend Davout's right flank, Napoleon leads the Imperial Guard east to reinforce the III Corps. But when the Austrians withdraw, Napoleon countermarches the Imperial Guards to the centre.

01 GRANDE ARMÉE ESTABLISHES BRIDGEHEAD

French Emperor Napoleon deploys his army from Lobau island to the north bank of the Danube River throughout the day of 5 July. Marshal André Masséna's French troops clear the Austrians from the villages along the river. This enables the bulk of the French army to deploy on the Marchfeld plain.

07 FRESH FRENCH FORCES ARRIVE

Marshal Auguste de Marmont, commanding the French XI Corps, crosses to the north side of the Danube and joins the French right wing in its second attempt to drive the Austrians from the Russbach. Marmont's troops capture Baumersdorf, putting increased pressure on Austrian General Hohenzollern's II Corps.



Napoleon believed that his best chance for success lay in crushing the Austrian right wing. He ordered Davout to capture the key village of Markgrafneusiedl. The veteran III Corps commander would then roll up the Austrian left flank, while the French forces adjacent to Davout's corps to the west would pin the Austrians in place.

As for Archduke Charles, he felt his only chance for victory was to catch the French by surprise. At midnight he issued orders to his corps commanders. Charles ordered Prince Rosenberg, who commanded the Austrian IV Corps, to strike the French at dawn. Meanwhile, the three corps on the Austrian right wing were to align themselves for a co-ordinated attack against the weak French line between Aspern and Wagram. But when Charles learned shortly after sunrise that the Austrian right wing was not ready to attack, he ordered Rosenberg to call off his plan.

Napoleon also had his share of problems the second day. When he learned that Bernadotte had withdrawn his infantry from Aderklaa, the emperor ordered Bernadotte, with the assistance of Masséna's IV Corps, to retake the village. Since the demoralised Saxons were no longer combat effective, the brunt of the attack fell to Masséna's veteran troops. To support the Austrian force in Aderklaa, General Bellegarde ordered three of his divisions to deploy in two lines between Aderklaa and Wagram.

At 7am Claude Carra Saint-Cyr ordered his French troops to storm Aderklaa. Several

thousand French soldiers from the 4th and 24th Line Regiments spearheaded the assault. They were well supported by the Hessen-Darmstadt brigade. As the French swept forward through fields of half-grown corn, they came under murderous musketry from the Austrians, firing from windows of houses and from behind garden walls. Because of their superior numbers, the attackers pried loose the defenders, who fled north.

The French continued their advance. They shattered the first of Bellegarde's infantry lines beyond the village, but the second line held firm, as the corps commander was on hand to rally them. The exhausted attackers reeled before the heavy volleys of the Austrians. The Saxons joined the assault, but they had the bad fortune to get cut up by 800 horsemen of the Klenau Chevauleger regiment. Once again the unlucky Saxons fled for the safety of the French rear, but this time they ran into Napoleon. He stopped their retrograde movement and proceeded to berate Bernadotte for his incompetence.

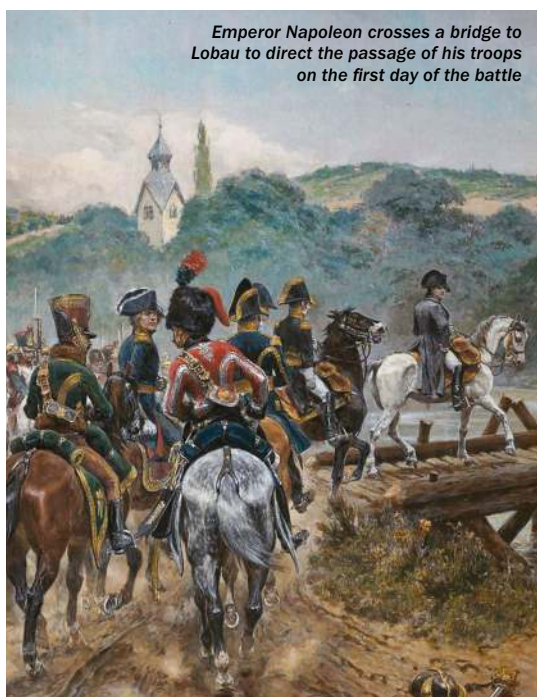
By that time, the Austrian Grenadier Reserve had arrived just west of Aderklaa. Three grenadier battalions joined Bellegarde's infantry in a counterattack that drove the French back and recaptured Aderklaa. The French did not give ground easily, and musket volleys were traded at close range. In some instances, the opponents fell on each other with clubbed muskets and bayonets, in bloody melees that swirled through the fields like

cyclones. Masséna was not willing to concede the advantage to the Austrians, and he therefore ordered a fresh division into the battle. General Gabriel Molitor sent two brigades to support Carra Saint Cyr's hard-pressed troops. Fresh battalions from the French brigades of generals Francois-Joseph Leguay and Raymond Vivies rushed forward in a quest to retake Aderklaa. The 67th Line Regiment gained a foothold in Aderklaa, but it was ejected by the crack grenadiers of the Austrian reserve. When Masséna's attack ebbed, the Austrians were in firm control of Aderklaa.

By 9am the three corps of the Austrian right wing had aligned with each other, but they did not yet have orders authorising them to proceed with a general attack, so they did not attack in unison. It was a great lost opportunity, for Archduke Charles might have been able to shatter Napoleon's left wing, which was held only by Masséna's overstretched corps.

From his position behind the French right wing at Raasdorf, Napoleon had issued orders for Davout's III Corps to capture Markgrafneusiedl, which was occupied by a force from Rosenberg's IV Corps. The divisions of generals Jacques Puthod and Charles-Étienne Gudin set out at 10am for the village, which was defended by the 2,200 musketeers of General Robert Freiherr Swinburne's brigade. The French, who outnumbered the defenders of the village, launched a headlong attack into a firestorm of musketry. Unable to withstand the withering fire,

“IN SOME INSTANCES THE OPPONENTS FELL ON EACH OTHER WITH CLUBBED MUSKETS AND BAYONETS, IN BLOODY MELEES THAT SWIRLED THROUGH THE FIELDS LIKE CYCLONES”



the French fell back. Reinforcements were fed into the village by Louis de Rohan in a desperate effort to hold it in the face of French assaults.

On the escarpment north of Markgrafneusiedl was a watchtower that could be seen from a great distance. When Davout's horse was shot from under him during the fighting, his subordinates rode to check on his condition. Fixated on the attack, Davout pointed to the north, where a sea of Austrian infantry was massed around the base of the watchtower, and motioned to his officers to drive them from the high ground.

About that time, General Charles Morand's division stormed the escarpment behind the village, but was hurled back by crashing volleys from General Georg von Mayer's brigade, facing east in anticipation of a flanking attack on the village. Davout sent his last division forward to reinforce Morand, and together they succeeded in dislodging the Austrians from the east end of the escarpment. At noon Swinburne withdrew from the village.

When Swinburne quit Markgrafneusiedl, Rosenberg was in the process of establishing a new line further back on the escarpment. This meant abandoning the part of the escarpment where the watchtower stood to the French. It was at this time that Archduke Charles arrived with reinforcements. He brought with him General Wenzel von Buresch's brigade from the Austrian II Corps, and also the imposing Hohenzollern Cuirassiers with their black cuirasses and helmets. Charles sent the cuirassiers to reinforce Field Marshal Lieutenant Johann von Nostitz's light cavalry, who Charles directed to counterattack the French cavalry, which were menacing the rear of the Austrian army.

While Rosenberg was forming a new line, Napoleon ordered Oudinot's II Corps, facing the Russbach to the west of Davout's corps,

to launch a frontal assault on the Austrian II Corps in order to pin it down and prevent its commander from detaching units to reinforce Rosenberg's corps on his right. The French emperor also began to feed large numbers of fresh troops into the fight. To the west of Oudinot, Auguste de Marmot's 10,000-strong XI Corps, which had just arrived behind the French right wing, was ordered to go into action against that portion of Hohenzollern's II Corps deployed west of Baumersdorf.

The final thrust

With the Austrian left wing giving ground on the east side of the battlefield, the focus shifted at 1pm to the west of the battlefield and the line formed by the villages of Sussenbrunn-Aderklaa-Wagram, where Napoleon had issued orders for a major attack against the Austrian centre. Napoleon massed 112 guns into a grand battery under the direction of General Jacques Lauriston of the Guard Artillery. Lauriston had orders to pummel the Austrian centre and open gaps in the enemy's line that the French foot might exploit. The guns sent a storm of iron raining down on the Austrians.

Napoleon entrusted the business of penetrating the Austrian centre to General Jacques MacDonald. Under Napoleon's direction, the V Corps commander formed a massive hollow square with his two divisions and one division from General Paul Grenier's VI Corps. They were followed by the remaining troops from Grenier's corps.

33,000 soldiers assembled for the assault against the Austrian centre. On their right were cuirassiers and carabineers from Marshal Bessieres's cavalry reserve, and on their left was General von Wrede's Bavarian Division, who would face General Kollowrat's III Corps,

still waiting to play an active role in the battle.

MacDonald's square advanced at 1pm into a wall of fire from the Austrian infantry and artillery. When they engaged the Austrians, von Wrede and the troops on the left side of the square battled General Kollowrat's III Corps infantry, while the French heavy cavalry and the troops on the right grappled with the grenadiers of Johann I Joseph's Reserve Corps. The grenadiers poured a withering fire into the square's right side, and inflicted massive casualties on MacDonald's square. In so doing, the grenadiers shattered the attack by the French heavy cavalry.

Only about one-tenth of the troops from the square and the supporting formations survived the Austrian fire to pass through the gaps opened by the French artillery. But Napoleon sent the Young Guard into action to fully exploit the breaches in the Austrian line. Shortly afterwards, Napoleon issued orders for his entire army to push forward against the Austrians. With his centre breached, his left wing rolled up and his right wing falling back, Archduke Charles ordered his force to retreat in good order.

The French lost 32,500 men, and the Austrians lost 37,000 men in the battle. Through the Treaty of Schönbrunn, signed on 14 October, France took additional Austrian territory, which it distributed to Bavaria and the Duchy of Warsaw. Austrian Emperor Francis I was outraged that his younger brother had negotiated terms, believing Charles had overstepped his authority, and he dismissed Charles from command.

Napoleon's victory at Wagram enabled him to save face after the debacle at Aspern-Essling, but other powers noted that he could be defeated. As the Austrians showed at Aspern-Essling, the formula to defeat Napoleon was a talented commander, proper equipment and training and high morale.

Napoleon, in the right foreground, watches as his army mounts a formidable attack on the Austrian centre on 6 July

“LAURISTON HAD ORDERS TO PUMMEL THE AUSTRIAN CENTRE AND OPEN GAPS IN THE ENEMY'S LINE THAT THE FRENCH FOOT MIGHT EXPLOIT. THE GUNS SENT A STORM OF IRON RAINING DOWN”



THE THIRD REICH IN PHOTOS

DEATH STRUGGLE

—OF 1941—

THE NAZI CAMPAIGN IN THE EAST WITNESSED SOME OF THE BLOODIEST FIGHTING AND MOST RUTHLESS OCCUPATIONS

WORDS PAUL GARSON

CHANGE OF TYRANTS JULY 1941 ▶

A RUSSIAN CIVILIAN UNVEILS A NEW POSTER, THE NAME OF HITLER SPELLED OUT IN CYRILLIC LETTERS

History's short-term memory, facilitated by Soviet efforts to fog over the perfidious treachery, often fails to recall that arch-enemies Nazi Germany and the USSR teamed up to destroy Poland in September 1939 under the banner of their infamous non-aggression pact. That partnership would end violently on 22 June 1941 when German forces swept into the Soviet Union. Hitler was intent on utterly destroying what he saw as the foundation of communism and 'World Jewry', and in the process gaining huge territories and resources for the Third Reich, to further the goal of dominating Europe and enslaving or exterminating its peoples.

The Germans called the invasion 'Operation Barbarossa' after Frederick Barbarossa, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and a leader of the 12th-century Third Crusade. Axis forces attacked with some 3 million soldiers, including Hungarian and Romanian allies, 3,580 tanks, 7,184 artillery guns, 1,830 planes and 750,000 horses. The storm of fire and steel launched on both land and from the air struck eastward, intent on destroying Stalin's Russia in four months.

As Western Europe's self-proclaimed 'cultural warriors', German soldiers brought both orchestras and poison gas, and also their personal cameras to document what they foresaw as certain success. Envisioning themselves as the defenders of Western civilisation and as crusaders against the Asiatic hordes of the 'Bolshevik-Jewish world threat', they viewed their victims as Slavic 'untermenschen' or 'subhumans', or, as Göring described them, "useless eaters". Thus the Nazi leadership planned, once the war had been won, for 30 million Russian civilians to be mass-executed via starvation to make room for German colonists.

When first invading the Ukraine, German forces were greeted as liberators, Stalin's draconian economic pogroms having caused the starvation and death of millions and the deportation of millions more. Choosing between the lesser of two evils, many Soviet citizens hoped for relief from the communist dictatorship and even independence for their homelands – ultimately false hopes, quickly dispelled by the German policies of racial persecution, mass murder and enslavement.

Hitler had predicted the USSR would "fall like a rotten house of cards" within a few months. So assured were the German generals that they failed to equip their troops with adequate clothing and equipment, and tens of thousands, dressed in thin summer uniforms, would pay the price exacted by Russia's 'General Winter', when temperatures fell to -34 degrees Celsius, freezing both men and machines.

However, 1941 would at first appear as a pivotal year and a harbinger of Nazi Germany's military success, as its seemingly unstoppable forces initially swept away Red Army defenders. But time, distance, growing resistance and the weather, along with a fatal arrogance, brought grinding setbacks, including the failure to occupy Moscow. Far greater defeats would follow, but not before Nazi bullets, bombs and flames had killed 30 million Russians.



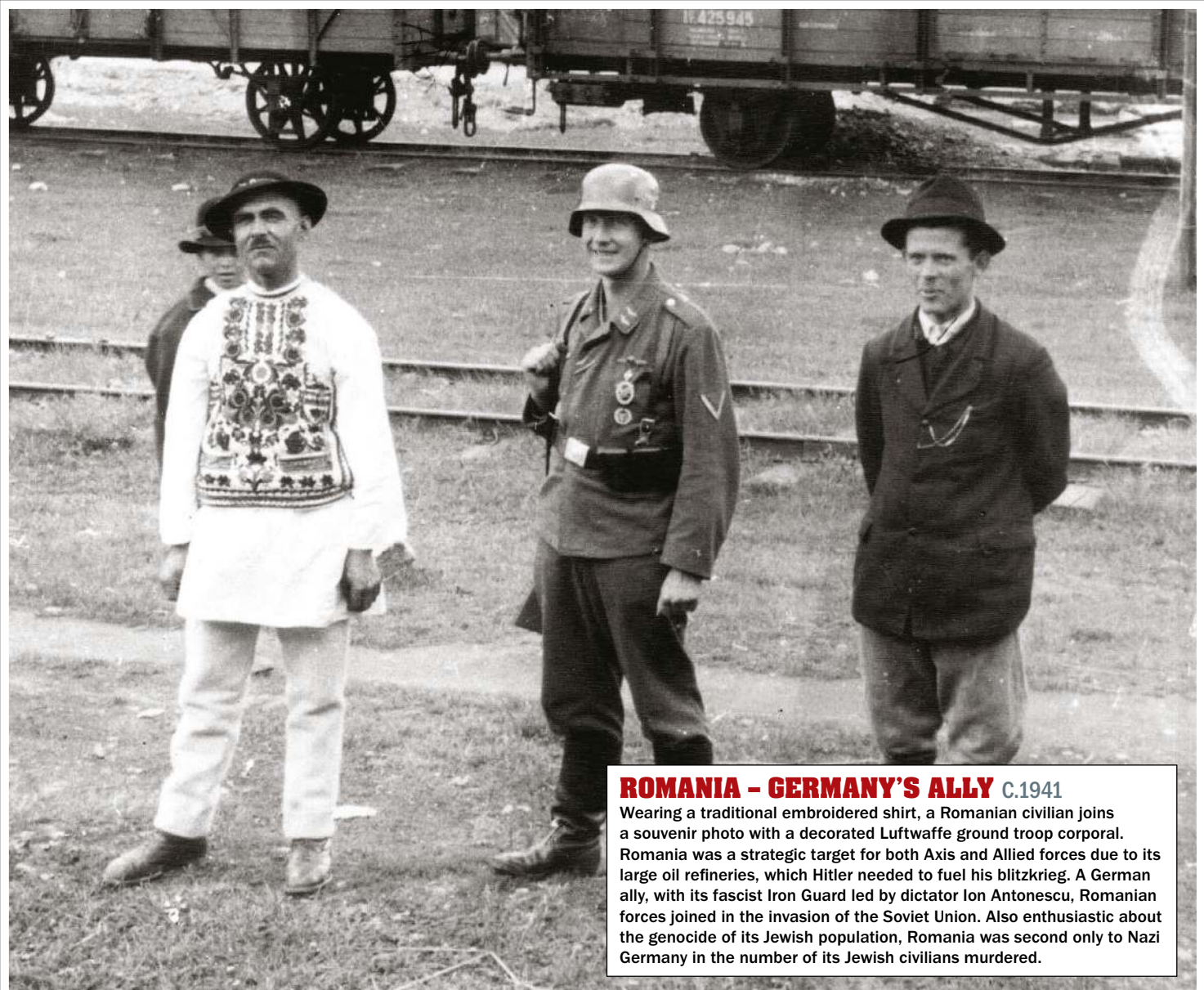


◄ CROATIAN FASCISTS

APRIL 1941

Yugoslavian civilians in traditional national dress parade before their fellow citizens at an early point in the German invasion and occupation, which began on 6 April 1941. The country was already divided between ethnic, religious, pro-fascist, pro-national and pro-communist forces. Pro-fascist Croatia would join the Axis on 15 June 1941, a week before the invasion of the Soviet Union. As a satellite state ruled by the brutal Ustaše (Ustasha), its leadership and members were responsible for the murder of half a million people, while 200,000 were forced to convert to Catholicism.

“ITS LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF HALF A MILLION PEOPLE”



ROMANIA - GERMANY'S ALLY C.1941

Wearing a traditional embroidered shirt, a Romanian civilian joins a souvenir photo with a decorated Luftwaffe ground troop corporal. Romania was a strategic target for both Axis and Allied forces due to its large oil refineries, which Hitler needed to fuel his blitzkrieg. A German ally, with its fascist Iron Guard led by dictator Ion Antonescu, Romanian forces joined in the invasion of the Soviet Union. Also enthusiastic about the genocide of its Jewish population, Romania was second only to Nazi Germany in the number of its Jewish civilians murdered.

**TODAY
SEVASTOPOL,
TOMORROW
THE WORLD**

OCTOBER 1941

Directions and distances to cities of Europe sprout out of a street sign in Sevastopol, the strategic Ukrainian seaport in the Crimea. Hitler ordered the area taken to protect the nearby Romanian oil fields that were vital to Germany's fuel supplies. Von Manstein's 11th Army, with supporting Romanian troops, began a siege on 30 October 1941. Russian infantry and naval personnel fought courageously but German forces prevailed – both sides suffered major losses. 18,000 Russians were killed, 95,000 captured. The German 11th Army listed 4,264 killed, 21,626 wounded and 1,522 missing, while Romanian casualties included 1,597 killed and 6,571 wounded. Less than a dozen buildings in Sevastopol remained. After the fighting ended, SS-Einsatzgruppe D entered the city and murdered its Jewish residents.

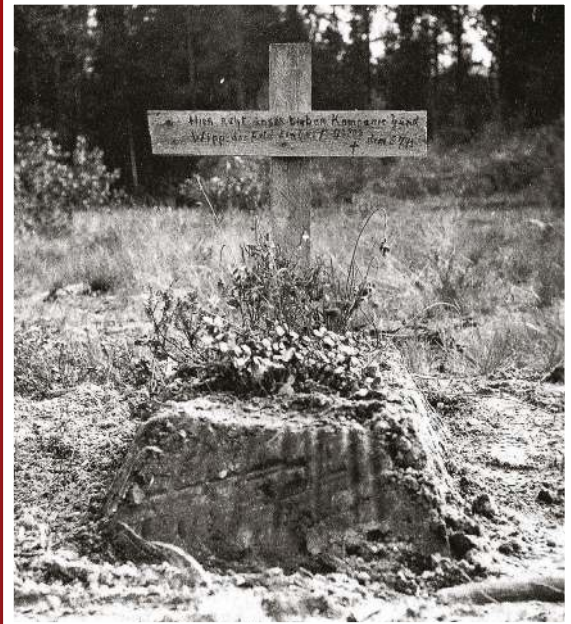
**“RUSSIAN INFANTRY AND
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↓ DISFIGUREMENT - WIA ON THE EASTERN FRONT 1941

A soldier of the 20th Infantry with a bandaged facial wound poses for his portrait in a Vienna photographer's studio. His collar insignia indicates his NCO rank, while the tunic ribbon records his awarding of the Iron Cross Second Class. A large percentage of even seriously wounded German soldiers resumed their duties: during 1942-43, for example, a reported 47.7 per cent returned to combat. Badges in black, silver and gold reflected various numbers of wounds, from one to several.



A SOLDIER'S BEST FRIEND KIA IN RUSSIA JULY 1941

The handwritten inscription on the wooden cross reads, "Here Lies Our Beloved Company Dog Wipp of Field Unit 63 Regiment 93 - Killed in Action 5 July 1941."

GERMAN LIBERATOR AND 'LIBERATED' UKRAINIAN JUNE 1941

The date is handwritten on the reverse of this photo showing a German NCO, who has donned a Ukrainian girl's traditional headdress as she smiles warmly for the camera.





THE ENEMY

1941

Battle-hardened German soldiers surround two Russians, possibly father and son, and have them pose for a souvenir photo. The final fate of the two men is unknown, but was certainly death if they were considered partisans or other 'undesirables'.

MOTHER RUSSIA DEFIANT

1941

Standing out from the mass of male prisoners of war, a female prisoner glowers at the camera. In Germany, when newsreels showed footage of Russian women soldiers, the women in the audience often reportedly shouted out angrily at them and called for their deaths.



"MOST WOULD FIND THEMSELVES IN A VAST EMPTY FIELD ENCIRCLED WITH BARBED WIRE AND LEFT WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER"

DEATH MARCH OF MILLIONS

1941

Lines of Soviet prisoners, both POWs and civilians, trudge along a dirt road. Only a handful of German guards are required to patrol the seemingly endless line of men, as they had nowhere to flee. Most would find themselves in a vast empty field encircled with barbed wire and left without food or water. Some 3 million Soviet POWs starved to death.





“SHOT WHILE ESCAPING” ▲

1941

Alleged ‘partisans’, bound together by rope, are led down a dusty village road to their fate, as a German corporal glances back at the camera. During July 1941 German troops occupied Latvia, then entered Ukraine. Smolensk was captured, and the mass-execution of Jews commenced as the SS-Einsatzgruppen followed the regular troops. At this point 750,000 Red Army soldiers entered captivity – most suffered death by starvation.

RUSSIAN MASS GRAVE ▶

JULY 1941

A German photographed the burial place of ten Russian soldiers. Whether they were buried by friend or foe is unknown. One helmet appears to mark a sniper’s work.



THE MARCH —TO THE SEA—

On 15 November 1864 a Union army set forth from Atlanta on what became one of the most controversial military campaigns ever staged

WORDS DAVID SMITH



The struggle for Atlanta had been a cagey, cat-and-mouse affair, dragging on through the summer of 1864. Confederate forces under General Joseph E. Johnston had repeatedly withdrawn in the face of William Tecumseh Sherman's Union army, and frustration was growing on both sides.

War-weariness was a genuine concern in the North. The procession of costly battles – names like Shiloh, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg and Chickamauga still resonate today – showed no signs of coming to an end. Half a million men had died in the fighting so far.

As well as the drawn-out campaign against Atlanta, Ulysses S. Grant was bogged down in trench warfare at Petersburg, Virginia. The war

seemed to be dragging on with no end in sight. Adding pressure was a presidential campaign, with Abraham Lincoln seeking re-election. Democratic candidate George Brinton McClellan, a former commander-in-chief of Union forces, was running against Lincoln on a so-called 'peace-platform' and there was real fear that Lincoln might be defeated and a negotiated settlement reached.

The Confederate armies had their own worries to contend with. Johnston seemed unwilling to stand and fight and it looked as if he might eventually give up Atlanta without a battle. Despite his success in dragging out the campaign at this critical juncture, the Confederate leadership could not stomach a seemingly endless defensive. Johnston was replaced as commander of the Army of

Tennessee by the firebrand John Bell Hood, who immediately embarked on a series of costly and unsuccessful offensives. The battered Confederate army was forced to evacuate Atlanta, providing a shot in the arm for Lincoln's campaign. "Atlanta is ours" Sherman telegraphed the president, "and fairly won".

With tension eased by the capture of Atlanta, Sherman pondered his next move. The following campaign would win him fame or infamy, depending on your viewpoint.

The hard hand of war

Sherman's idea was to march his army through Georgia. It was to be a deliberate and calculated act to cow the state and destroy its war-making capabilities. In a telegram to Grant, he wrote of his plan for the "utter destruction

Sherman was a formidable commander, but his most audacious decision would be to focus his attentions on the civilian population of the South



"AS WELL AS THE DRAWN-OUT CAMPAIGN AGAINST ATLANTA, ULYSSES S. GRANT WAS BOGGED DOWN IN TRENCH WARFARE AT PETERSBURG. THE WAR SEEMED TO BE DRAGGING ON WITH NO END IN SIGHT"

THE MARCH TO THE SEA

of its roads, houses, and people,” and how this would “cripple their military resources”.

Much has been written of Sherman's decision to confront civilians with the realities of war, but he was willing to consider less oppressive methods to achieve his goal. Writing to Governor Joseph Brown, he offered to march peacefully through the state if Georgia would withdraw from the rebellion. If it did not, then Sherman would “be compelled to go ahead, devastating the State in its whole length and breadth”.

Sherman was still waiting for permission from Grant to begin his march, and Hood had 40,000 soldiers in the vicinity to contest his progress. On 21 September Hood took the imaginative decision to attack Sherman's supply lines, forcing plans for the march to be shelved, as Union troops backtracked through the state to counter Hood's move. Sherman, seething with frustration, persuaded Grant that chasing Hood was pointless.

On 2 November he was granted permission to abandon the pursuit of Hood and march to the coast. It resulted in a peculiar spectacle, as Sherman himself fully appreciated: “Two hostile armies marching in opposite directions, each in the full belief that it was achieving a final and conclusive result in a great war.”

Forces in Georgia

The prospect of marching hundreds of kilometres through hostile territory, with no communications, no supply line and no chance

“THE CONFEDERATES COULD NOT HOPE TO PROTECT EVERY POTENTIAL TARGET ALONG THE UNION MARCH”

of rescue appeared daunting. Some envisioned an apocalyptic scenario in which the Union army would be whittled down by guerrilla actions, starved and harried and destroyed entirely by swarming militia. It was not a prospect for the faint-hearted. Nor was it one for the infirm or injured – a thorough medical examination weeded out almost 800 weak and sickly men before the march even started.

The army was organised into two wings, each of two corps – XIV and XX Corps for the left wing, XV and XVII Corps for the right. Sherman knew that Confederate resistance would be limited and he intended to make it even less effective through deception. Each wing would threaten a town or city, but if Confederate forces massed to resist, the wings would shift course to a different destination. With limited manpower, the Confederates could not hope to protect every potential target along the Union march.

Each wing of the army numbered more than 27,000 men, and there was also a 5,000-strong cavalry division, commanded by the hot-headed Hugh Judson Kilpatrick,

known as ‘kill-cavalry’ thanks to his excessively aggressive nature.

With Hood taking out of the picture the only major Confederate army available to protect Georgia, defence was left to whatever units could be scraped together. A cavalry force of 3,500 under ‘Fighting Joe’ Wheeler was potentially the biggest problem, if it could avoid the superior numbers of Union cavalry protecting Sherman's army. There was also state militia, some line regiments, a little artillery and a selection of largely untrained cadets. Scattered around the state, they were unable to do much other than fall back in the face of an overwhelming enemy.

The march begins

Sherman's men travelled light. Only 20 days' worth of rations were carried in the long wagon trains that followed the roads out of Atlanta in the middle of November, heading southeast. Only five days' worth of forage was carried for the thousands of animals used to haul those wagons – six mules for each one of the 2,500 wagons, and two horses for each of the 600 ambulances. One gun was taken for every 1,000 men, but Sherman was not envisioning any major pitched battles.

Before leaving, Atlanta was destroyed, with a fire adding to the devastation on the night of 14 November. Sherman's men then began to cut a swathe of destruction through Georgia. The railroad was a prime target. Sleepers were

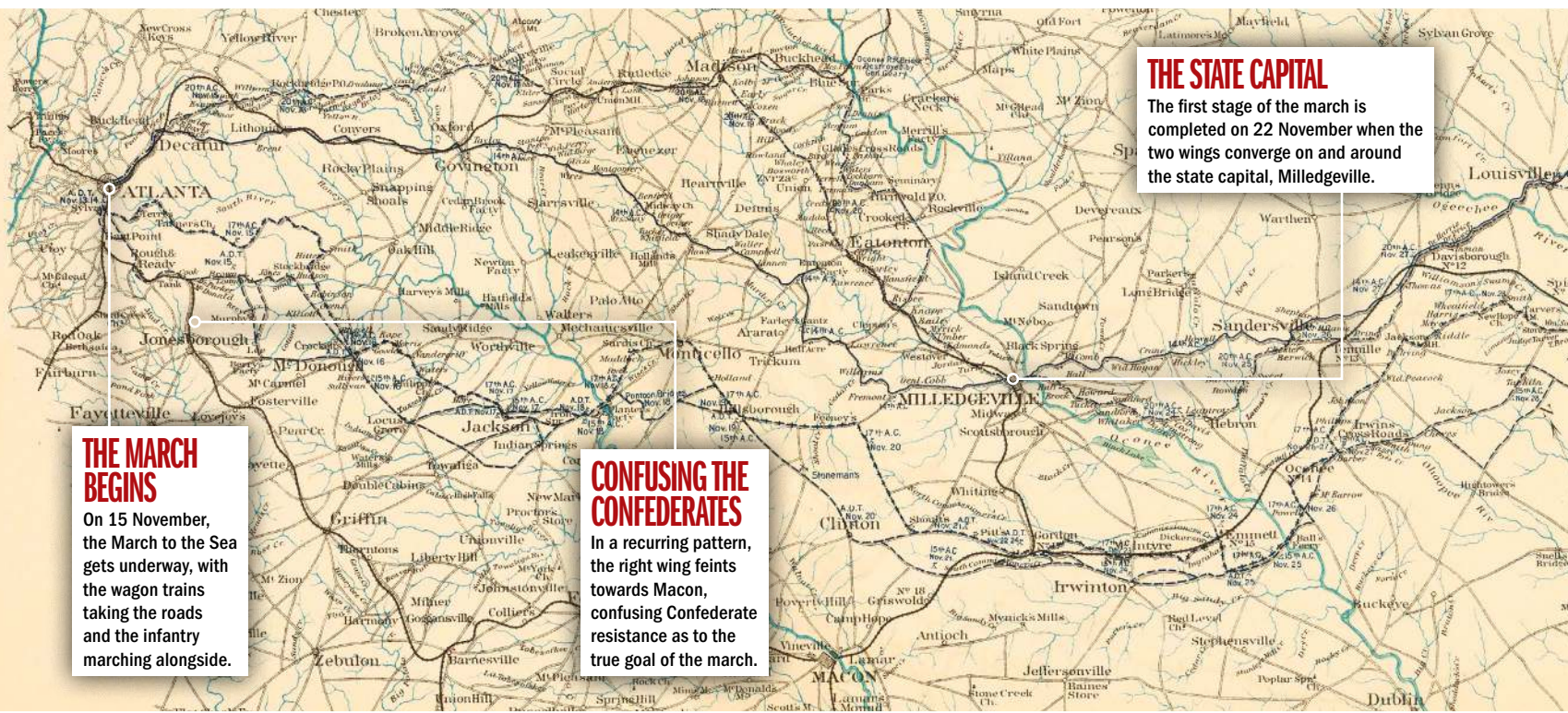
SHERMAN'S MARCH

THE TWO WINGS OF SHERMAN'S ARMY MADE EASY PROGRESS THROUGH GEORGIA, GOING WHERE THEY WANTED, WHEN THEY WANTED

Although some talked gloomily of a scorched-earth policy being employed, Sherman had no doubt that his men would prevail. The march was easier during its first stage. With Atlanta situated in the Piedmont plateau, characterised by low

rolling hills, the ground was firm, and there was also a certain novelty to the campaign, which kept the spirits of the marching columns high. Some of the men on the march talked of it in terms of a pleasure excursion.

The second phase of the march saw the landscape become bleaker as the plateau gave way to the coastal plain. Sandy and then marshy ground made progress difficult, and many soldiers noted that the march had become tiresome.



THE MARCH BEGINS

On 15 November, the March to the Sea gets underway, with the wagon trains taking the roads and the infantry marching alongside.

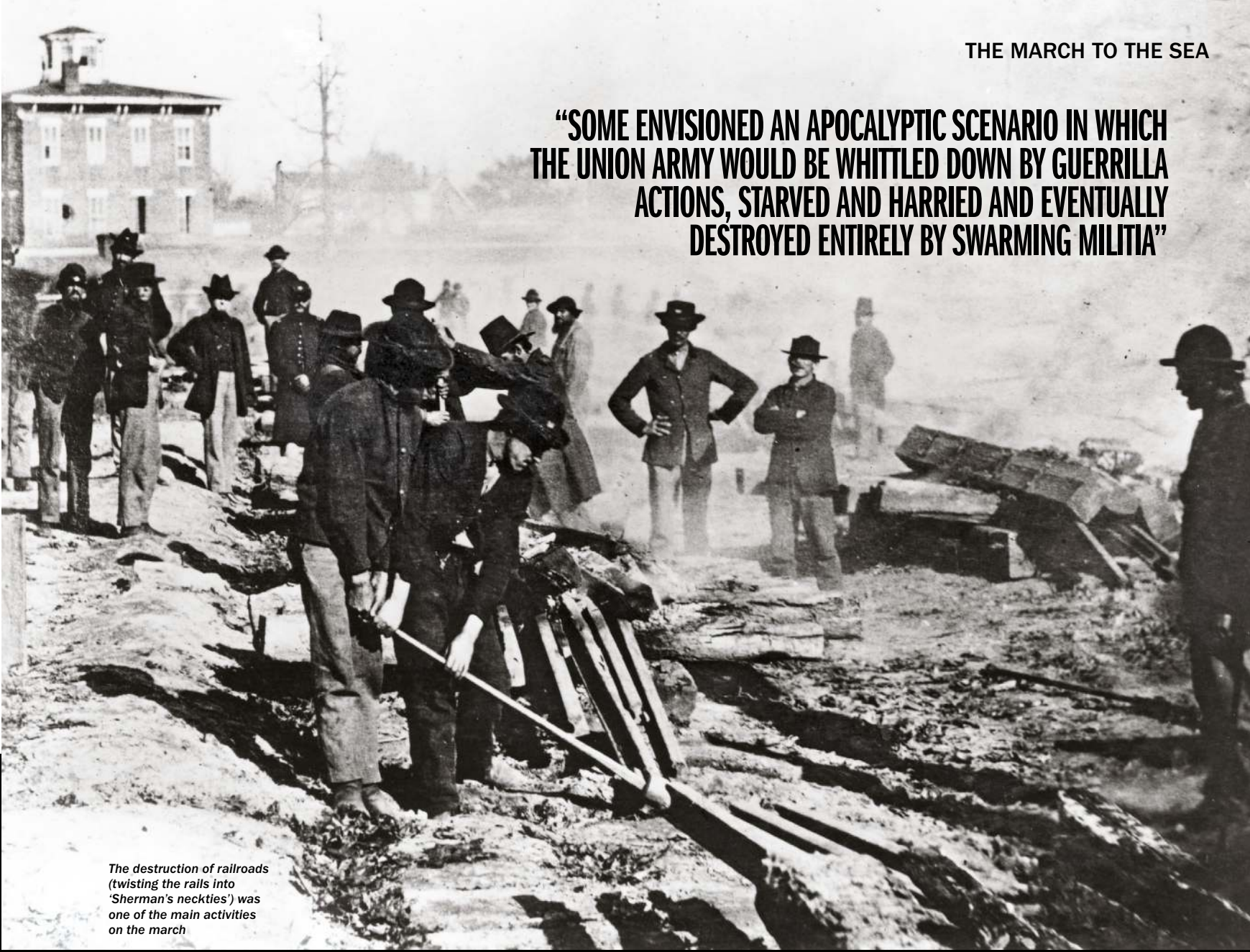
CONFUSING THE CONFEDERATES

In a recurring pattern, the right wing feints towards Macon, confusing Confederate resistance as to the true goal of the march.

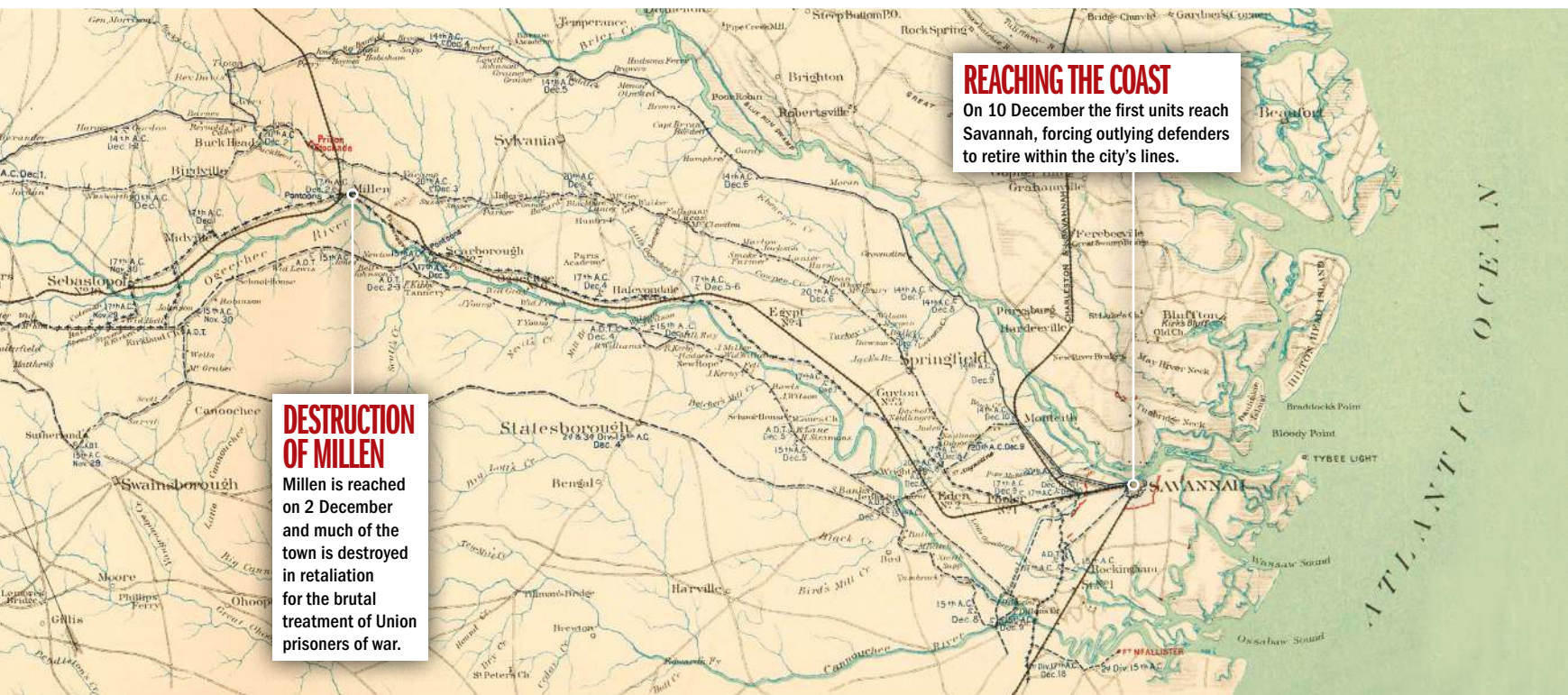
THE STATE CAPITAL

The first stage of the march is completed on 22 November when the two wings converge on and around the state capital, Milledgeville.

“SOME ENVISIONED AN APOCALYPTIC SCENARIO IN WHICH THE UNION ARMY WOULD BE WHITTLED DOWN BY GUERRILLA ACTIONS, STARVED AND HARRIED AND EVENTUALLY DESTROYED ENTIRELY BY SWARMING MILITIA”



The destruction of railroads (twisting the rails into 'Sherman's neckties') was one of the main activities on the march

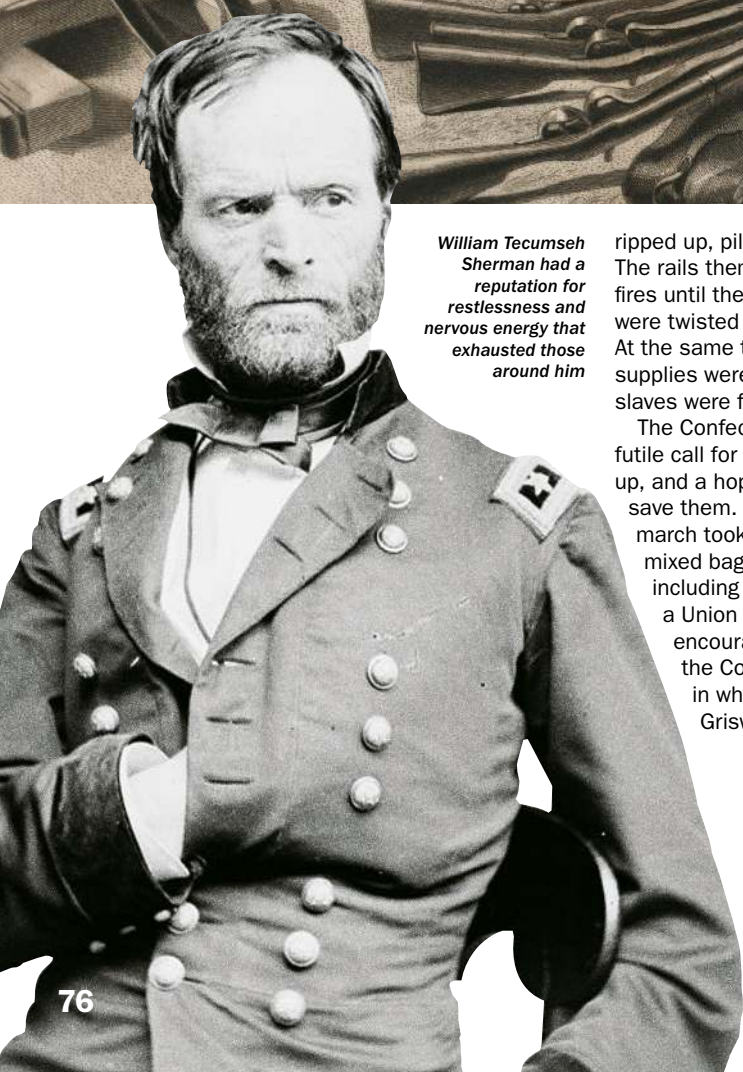


REACHING THE COAST

On 10 December the first units reach Savannah, forcing outlying defenders to retire within the city's lines.

DESTRUCTION OF MILLEN

Millen is reached on 2 December and much of the town is destroyed in retaliation for the brutal treatment of Union prisoners of war.



William Tecumseh Sherman had a reputation for restlessness and nervous energy that exhausted those around him

ripped up, piled into a bonfire and set on fire. The rails themselves were then heated on the fires until they softened, at which point they were twisted or bent beyond hope of repair. At the same time crops, livestock and other supplies were commandeered or destroyed and slaves were freed.

The Confederate response was mainly a futile call for the civilian population to rise up, and a hope that somehow faith would save them. The first serious fighting of the march took place on 22 November, when a mixed bag of around 3,000 Confederates, including state militia, stumbled upon a Union force half its size. Perhaps encouraged by this disparity in numbers, the Confederates chose to attack in what is known as the Battle of Griswoldville, but which was in fact

little more than a slaughter. The untested southern troops, many of them boys or old men, had no business launching a frontal assault against trained and entrenched troops, and the Union soldiers were also armed with Spencer repeating rifles. The battle was one-sided, resulting in around 600 Confederate casualties, against less than 100 for the Union troops. It had been a show of resistance at least, but it achieved nothing.

The 'bummers'

Sherman's orders to his men were to "forage liberally on the country", but he could not risk letting loose his entire army of 60,000 men. Foraging parties were instead organised by each brigade. These usually numbered between 30 and 50 men, with a single officer to retain some sort of order. Private property was not

"THE CONFEDERATES CHOSE TO ATTACK IN WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE BATTLE OF GRISWOLDVILLE, BUT WHICH WAS IN FACT LITTLE MORE THAN A SLAUGHTER"

Sherman's March to the Sea was characterised by devastated infrastructure and property. The railroads were sabotaged and stores burned, while slaves were set free by the Union forces



“WHETHER OR NOT HOOD’S MEN WOULD HAVE BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO OPPOSE SHERMAN’S MARCH IS DEBATABLE, BUT THEY WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OFFER MORE RESISTANCE”

supposed to be entered, and civilians were to be left with enough food to get them through the winter, but the men were also to destroy most of what they could not carry back to the marching columns.

Known as ‘bummers’, Sherman’s foragers earned a dark reputation among the southern population. The general would later claim to have heard of only two rapes during the entire march, but the true toll was vastly higher. Private properties were also routinely ransacked and possessions stolen or destroyed.

Whether Sherman turned a deaf ear to reports of such activity, or whether he thought it was nothing more than the South deserved for starting the war, he tended to speak with approval of the foraging parties. They would set out in the morning on foot and invariably return in the evening riding requisitioned animals.

The idea of the march becoming another retreat from Moscow soon began to seem ludicrous. In fact there was just too much for the army to take, and massive amounts of provisions were left behind or simply destroyed. Sherman would later estimate that his army had done \$100 million worth of damage to the state, with only 20 per cent of that actually used by the Union troops. “The remainder”, he admitted, “is simple waste and destruction”.

The Battle of Nashville

As Sherman’s men made progress, calls for Hood to return with the Army of Tennessee grew desperate, but he had other ideas. With just over 40,000 men, he intended to take on Union forces in Tennessee, capturing Nashville and moving northwards. He hoped this would force Sherman to reverse course.

The chance of success was slim, and they were not helped by Hood’s reckless handling of his army. At Franklin on 30 November, he launched a suicidal frontal assault against prepared defences, taking 7,000 casualties, including 12 generals. Greatly weakened, his army was then overwhelmed and shattered during two days of fierce fighting at the Battle of Nashville on 15-16 December.

Whether or not Hood’s men would have been strong enough to oppose Sherman’s march is debatable, but they would certainly have been able to offer more resistance. As it was, most of the Union troops marching through Georgia had little more to worry about than covering their 24 kilometres (15 miles) a day.

The second stage

It had taken just ten days to cover half the distance to Savannah, and one Union captain commented that it was “the most gigantic pleasure excursion ever planned”. Even the men in the foraging parties, the most obvious targets for Confederate resistance, were largely unscathed. Only 64 of them were killed during the march.



The interior of Fort McAllister, whose heavy earth walls were meant to absorb naval gunfire rather than withstand an infantry assault

Still, there was trepidation in the North. With Sherman out of contact there was no way of knowing if he was making smooth progress or getting bogged down in guerrilla actions. There would be no firm news until Sherman reached the coast and re-established communication.

The second stage of the march began with a feint towards Augusta. Once more, this was just a ruse to draw Confederate defenders, and Union cavalry under Kilpatrick moved towards the town to strengthen the deception. In clashes with defending Confederate cavalry, Kilpatrick's men were forced into a series of retreats. It was the most effective resistance of the entire march, but it changed nothing. A corridor was being swept through the state, with infrastructure being destroyed. Tellingly, the Union troops also targeted any building that could be "easily converted" to military use.

By late November the excursion atmosphere was starting to fade. The land was turning marshy, with pine forests proliferating. Sherman later wrote about the invigorating scent of pine wood on the campfires at night, but his men were not impressed: "I never saw such a lonesome place," an Illinois captain remarked, "Not a bird, not a sign of animal life, but the shrill notes of the tree frog... no vegetable life but just grass and pitch pine."

Kilpatrick's cavalry clashed once more with their Confederate counterparts at the Battle of Waynesborough, driving them away. Kilpatrick then hoped to rescue captive Union soldiers at the notorious prison at Millen, but the inmates had already been moved by the time he arrived. The Union troops noted the appalling conditions of the camp and a mass-burial pit holding 650 bodies, and the mood of the march soured.

The fall of Savannah

Military actions remained rare. On 1 December a captain noted that he had not heard enemy

Sherman marched on into South Carolina in 1865, wreaking even more destruction, including the burning of McPhersonville





Above: Although Sherman was unenthusiastic about freed slaves following his army, an estimated 25,000 flocked to his columns during the course of the march

gunfire for the previous nine days. Thoughts were turning to Savannah, where a garrison of around 10,000 was expected to offer at least some resistance. Before getting there, communications needed to be reopened, and that required the capture of Fort McAllister.

Originally developed to defend the coast from Union shipping, Fort McAllister had not been designed to withstand an assault from the land and was manned by just 150 Confederates, but it still represented an obstacle. On 13 December nine Union regiments stormed the fort and took it in 15 minutes. Sherman was then able to converse with the captain of the Union steamer *Dandelion*, re-establishing communications with the North.

Savannah now waited, and its fall was inevitable. Despite an extensive series of defensive works, including 81 pieces of artillery, there was no hope of holding out for long. Only the need to bring up heavy guns (his army had marched with only field pieces) delayed Sherman's assault, and Confederate forces took the opportunity to quietly evacuate the city on the night of 20 December. In a light-hearted, almost giddy telegram, Sherman offered Savannah to the president as a Christmas gift. Lincoln replied with heartfelt thanks.

The 'March to the Sea' had been completed, at a cost of just 1,888 men killed, wounded in action, captured or missing. Only 32 deaths had been suffered due to disease, testimony to the wisdom of undertaking a health check of the men before starting the march, and also to the benefits of outdoor life and regular exercise. Sherman, however, was far from done, and controversy over his epic march was just beginning.

Sherman marches on

Progress through Georgia had been so easy, the Union general determined to repeat the

process in South Carolina. Regarded as the seat of secessionism, antipathy towards South Carolina was far greater than it had been towards Georgia. This second march began on 1 February 1865, and the message to the Confederate states was clear. In case it needed underlining, Lincoln made a speech to Congress in which he stated, "We are gaining strength, and may, if need be, maintain the contest indefinitely."

The South, on the other hand, was losing men, supplies and war-making infrastructure. In South Carolina, the destruction wrought by Sherman's men was even worse. An unusually harsh winter barely slowed them as they bridged rivers and trudged through mud at a remorseless 16 kilometres (ten miles) a day. The march then continued into North Carolina, but much of its fury had abated as the war stumbled to its close. The ultimate aim, that of linking up with Grant's men besieging Petersburg, was never realised, as Grant achieved victory before Sherman could arrive.

The American Civil War was effectively over, but resentment would linger for years, much of it stoked by the harsh treatment of Confederate states by Sherman's men. There was concern that an interminable guerrilla war might break out, with small pockets of still-committed Confederates engaging in resistance-style sabotage and ambushes. Such a dire prospect was embraced by the Confederate cavalry commander Nathan Bedford Forrest, who took part in Hood's disastrous Tennessee campaign. "Be not allured by the siren song of peace," he implored the South. "You can never again unite with those who have murdered your sons, outraged your helpless families, and with demonic malice wantonly destroyed your property, and now seek to make slaves of you."

Forrest's exhortations were in vain, but anger over the March to the Sea would last for decades.

The verdict

History has not viewed Sherman kindly. His marches have been condemned by some as war crimes, although events in the 20th century have cast new light on his actions. The march through Georgia now seems positively tame when compared to the deliberate targeting of civilian populations in World War II, and unleashing foragers on the countryside seems mild compared to the dropping of atomic bombs.

Sherman had no doubt that he was actually waging a more humane form of warfare. Destroying the ability of a region to support an army was better, in his mind, than fighting that army and inflicting 15,000 casualties. While marching through South Carolina, he made this clear, commenting to one lady that he was destroying her plantation so that he wouldn't have to kill her husband on the battlefield.

He was also acting within the law, under the terms of the Lieber Code, framed by the legal scholar Franz Lieber and established in 1863. The code stipulated that "to save the country is paramount to all other considerations" and this allowed for acts such as the destruction of civilian property. Sherman, in any case, believed the war itself was an illegal act and needed to be terminated as quickly and as ruthlessly as possible.

Many will never be convinced, and there is no doubt that Sherman intended to inflict suffering on the civilian population of the South. He had left no doubt on that score when he lobbied Grant for permission to start his march, back in October 1864. "I can make the march," he had written to Grant in a telegram, "and make Georgia howl".



Heroes of the Victoria Cross

KHUDADAD KHAN

For his bravery during the First Battle of Ypres at Hollebeke, Belgium, on 31 October 1914, Sepoy Khudadad Khan became both the first Indian and the first Muslim to be awarded the Victoria Cross

WORDS MURRAY DAHM

Despite severe wounds, Sepoy Khudadad Khan continued to man the Maxim gun with five other men from his detachment from the 129th Baluchi regiment. Their British officer had already been wounded. As the men around him fell to sustained enemy fire, and despite receiving several more wounds himself, Khudadad Khan continued to man the gun until he was the sole survivor. When it was clear his position was going to be overrun, he ensured that the Maxim gun was rendered inoperable and then feigned death. After the enemy had moved on, Khudadad Khan managed to crawl back to friendly lines and seek medical attention for his wounds.

It was only in 1911 that King George V signed the Warrant extending the Victoria Cross to members of the Indian Army. Prior to that date, men of the Indian armed forces would be awarded one of the three levels of the Indian Order of Merit for gallantry. There were several incidents on the North-West Frontier in India during the 1890s where a British officer was awarded the Victoria Cross and men of the Indian army involved in the same action were awarded the Indian Order of Merit, which raised questions over extending the Victoria Cross to Indian soldiers. However, those discussions only led to a maintaining of the status quo.

The exact events surrounding the extension of the Victoria Cross in 1911 are unclear, since there was no parliamentary discussion about the issue prior to King George signing the Warrant. It was also unusual because the North-West Frontier in British India was relatively quiet at the time.

The exemption of Indian army personnel from being considered for the Victoria Cross does not seem to have been made on racial grounds – the first black person (and third Canadian) to be awarded the Victoria Cross, Seaman William Hall, had come in 1859 (for actions undertaken on 16 November 1857), while several other non-white men had been honoured subsequently in 1867 and 1892. The first opportunity for a member of the Indian army to be awarded the Victoria Cross,

“THE BRITISH OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE DETACHMENT HAVING BEEN WOUNDED, AND THE OTHER GUN PUT OUT OF ACTION BY A SHELL, SEPOY KHUDADAD, THOUGH HIMSELF WOUNDED, REMAINED WORKING HIS GUN UNTIL ALL THE OTHER FIVE MEN OF THE GUN DETACHMENT HAD BEEN KILLED”

London Gazette
7 December 1914

however, was to come during the first battle of Ypres in October 1914.

Khudadad Khan had enlisted as a sepoy (the equivalent of private) as a 25-year-old in the 129th Duke of Connaught's Own Baluchis, on 3 August 1914. The regiment was enlisting men in the North-West Frontier close to Khudadad Khan's hometown of Dab, Chakwal District, Punjab (now Pakistan). From there, the 129th moved to the Suez Canal as part of the 7th Indian (Ferozepore) Brigade and then on to France. The regiment was attached to the British Cavalry Corps at Ypres in the Gheluvelt Sector, which had been tasked with holding the line between Zandvoorde and Ploegsteert Wood (colloquially known to the British as 'Plugstreet', just as Ypres was known as 'Wipers'). On 22 October, the 129th Baluchis joined the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, as part of the 2nd Cavalry Division, commanded by Hubert Gough.

From 25 October to 13 November 1914, German forces mounted sustained assaults on the British lines in the Gheluvelt Sector where the British Cavalry Corps was stationed. Sometimes the action in which Khudadad Khan fought is termed the Battle of Gheluvelt, although it is usually considered one of the phases of the wider First Battle of Ypres.

The First Battle of Ypres came at the end of the strategic 'race to the sea' that occurred following the First Battle of the Marne in September 1914, when Allied forces halted the German advance. Before winter set in, several offensives were launched by both sides to try and outflank the other's northern flank. Following reversals at the Yser River and Langemarck, both north of Ypres, General Erich

Khudadad Khan,
painted around
1935 in a subadar's
uniform. He was the
first Indian to receive
the Victoria Cross

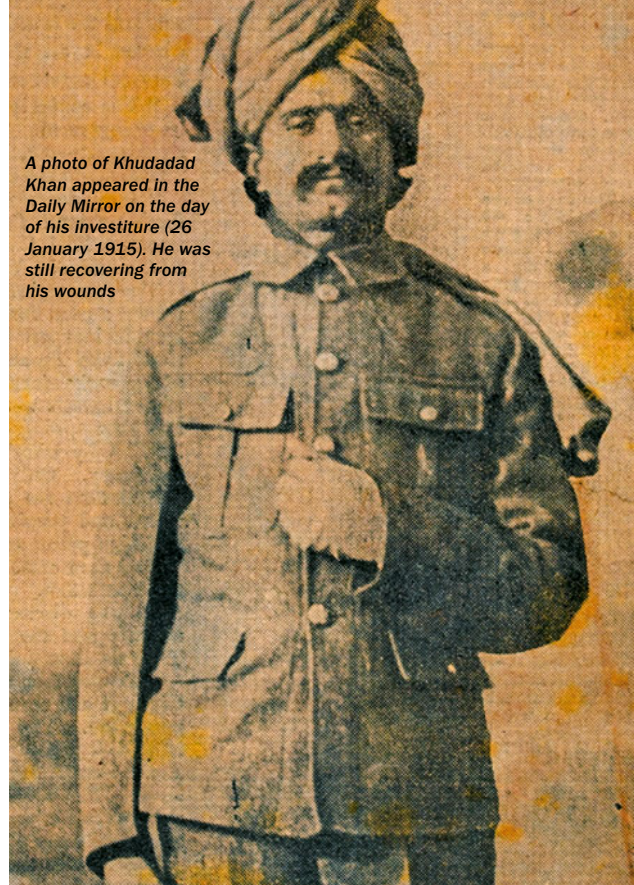
NATIONAL
ARMY
MUSEUM

Main image courtesy of National
Army Museum, Chelsea, London.
The museum is open daily from
10.30am-5.30pm (8pm on the
first Wednesday of every month).

For more information: www.nam.ac.uk



A photograph of the 129th Baluchis marching near Hollebeke in October 1914. This photo was taken before the actions of 31 October, when the unit suffered heavy casualties



A photo of Khudadad Khan appeared in the *Daily Mirror* on the day of his investiture (26 January 1915). He was still recovering from his wounds

“THE GERMAN ATTACK BROKE UPON THIS LINE ON THE 30TH OCTOBER, AND DURING THE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED THE ODDS AGAINST US HERE WERE 6 TO 1”

Beatrix Brice, *The Battle Book of Ypres* (London, 1927)

von Falkenhayn, chief of the German General Staff, the Oberste Heeresleitung, ordered a new force under General Max von Fabeck to attack towards Ypres beginning on 29 October. The 129th Baluchis had relieved the 4th Queen's Own Hussars at Hollebeke and so, with British and Indian officers, the Baluchis faced the sustained attacks of Armeegruppe Fabeck and were severely outnumbered. Estimates state that the 129th was outnumbered by as much as six to one.

The German attacks came to within three kilometres (two miles) of Ypres and pushed the Allied forces out of Hollebeke and its surrounds, although they then rallied and held the line 915 metres (1,000 yards) to the rear, especially with the help of French reinforcements and six battalions organised by Sir Edward Bulfin, known as 'Bulfin's Force'. Renewed attacks by the German forces broke through the thin 3rd Cavalry Brigade's lines again on 31 October, although the Germans were once again forced back by a successful counterattack from the infantry of the 2nd Worcestershire Regiment.

It was during the initial breakthrough by German forces on 31 October that Khudadad Khan's gallantry occurred. The dismounted cavalry were thinly spread across their designated area, and they gathered into small detachments that made use of shallow trenches and some remaining buildings (in which they withstood the incessant enemy bombardment). Due to the waterlogged ground, the trenches could not be dug any deeper. We know that there

were also Baluchi troops holding the line at Wytschaete southwest of Hollebeke, suggesting just how thinly spread the Allied forces were.

Sepoy Khudadad Khan was part of a detachment of 12 men of the 129th Baluchis under the command of a British officer, manning the two Maxim guns that were attached to the regiment. It would seem that this officer was Lieutenant K.C. North, who on 30 October (and presumably with Sepoy Khudadad Khan) had delayed the German advance for an hour and a half with these two guns, inflicting massive casualties, and finally withdrawing the guns by wheelbarrow only when their ammunition was expended. It is difficult to make clear sense of some of the sources, however, since although North is named as the officer in charge of the Baluchi machine guns at Hollebeke on 30 October (and we are told he died the following day), no mention is made of Khudadad Khan's actions in connection with him. Nor is North named as the injured officer in accounts of Khudadad Khan's actions.

Early on 31 October the Germans renewed their attacks, and the first Maxim gun was destroyed by an enemy shell, which also wounded the Baluchi British officer, possibly Lieutenant North, and left him incapacitated. Khudadad Khan and his companions then manned the other gun and kept it firing until all but Khudadad Khan were dead. The five other men all received posthumous awards for gallantry. Before his position was overrun, Khudadad spiked his Maxim gun, ensuring that

An aerial photograph showing the shelling around Hollebeke. Although taken after the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915, it gives a good sense of the flat terrain and shows the location of Hollebeke chateau. Gheluvelt is out of shot to the right (Ypres out of shot top left)



it could not be turned on his own men. He then feigned death until the Germans moved on, and then that night, after they were pushed back, he was able to crawl back to his own lines despite the multiple wounds he had received.

During the action 164 Baluchis were killed or wounded (another source claims this number was as high as 200) – one-third of their total force – as well as six Indian officers and six British officers. Estimates of British losses in the Gheluvelt Sector put their strength on the evening of 31 October at one-quarter of what it had been before the battle started in mid-October. Estimates for losses during the First Battle of Ypres from 14 October to 30 November vary, but it is estimated the British suffered between 55,000-58,000 casualties, the French 80,000-86,000, and 20,000 Belgians, while there were 134,000 German casualties – all for very little territorial gain on either side.

Khudadad Khan was initially treated for his wounds in France but was then sent for recovery to the Indian Convalescent Home in Hampshire. His wounds were so severe that he missed the first planned investiture for his award. It was probably intended that he be presented with his Victoria Cross at GHQ in Saint-Omer on 5 December 1914, since it was there that Darwan

Singh Negi was invested. Singh had also been severely wounded and was gazetted for his Victoria Cross in the same edition as Khudadad Khan. Darwan Singh Negi, of the 39th Garhwal Rifles, ranks as the second Indian to be awarded the Victoria Cross (for his actions of at Festubert on 23-24 November 1914). It is interesting to note that Singh was presented his award on 5 December but that it only appeared in the *London Gazette* on 7 December.

King George V presented several other Victoria Crosses in the field in France in early December – at least three on 1 and 3 December – but the presentation at GHQ on 5 December suggests that the first presentation to an Indian was considered an important event, especially since it had been King George who signed the Warrant extending the award of the Victoria Cross. Khudadad Khan was simply too badly wounded to take part and so the award was presented to Singh alone, even though he too was badly wounded (a photo from 23 December shows him being evacuated by stretcher).

The idea that this medal in particular was important is reinforced by the fact that when Khudadad Khan was recovered enough to receive his cross in late January 1915, he was front-page news in the *Daily Mirror*, with the

headline, “The first Indian to win the Victoria Cross”. King George may have been aware of the great debt the British Empire owed to the more than 1 million Indians who had volunteered to fight in Europe.

After recovering from his wounds, Khudadad Khan returned to his unit, being promoted to jamadar (lieutenant) in 1917 and senior jamadar in 1918. He was later promoted to subadar (captain). He went on to work as a farmer after leaving the army. He died in Rawalpindi in 1971 aged 82.

In many ways, Khudadad Khan and Darwan Singh Negi, as well as the nine other Indian Victoria Cross recipients from World War I, represent the 1.3 million Indians who volunteered to fight for Britain during the war. Of these, 400,000 were Muslim. These Indian forces suffered almost 60,000 casualties on the Western Front alone, with 8,500 killed, almost half of those Muslim. Their contribution to the war effort in both world wars and other theatres is one that is sadly too often overlooked.

Despite efforts to familiarise people with Khudadad Khan's actions during the centenary of the First Battle of Ypres in 2014, and adding his name to National Memorial Arboretum, his actions deserve to be more widely recognised.

“THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE BRITISH WAR EFFORT IN BOTH WORLD WARS AND OTHER THEATRES IS ONE THAT IS SADLY TOO OFTEN OVERLOOKED”



A contemporary illustration of Khudadad Khan's gallant action at Hollebeke



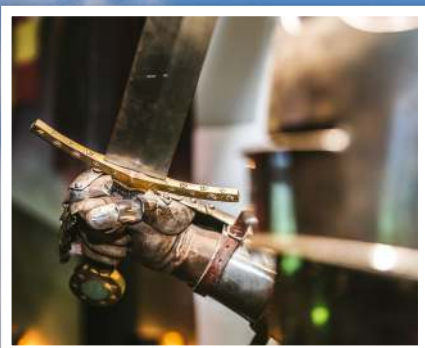
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MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover England's remarkable military history, including Richard III's last battlefield, a retirement home for Tudor veterans and a new IWM exhibition exploring the act of remembrance



Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre & Country Park

THIS UNIQUE BATTLEFIELD CHANGED THE COURSE OF ENGLISH HISTORY AND IS NOW PRESERVED AS AN EXCEPTIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE

The events of 22 August 1485, where Richard III was killed in battle and the Tudor dynasty began, are all on full display at the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre.

Located near Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, the heritage centre resides on Ambion Hill, where part of Richard's army camped the night before the battle. An external trail includes a memorial sundial to commemorate the fallen from the three armies of Richard, Henry Tudor and Thomas, Lord Stanley. Two war banners of Henry Tudor (subsequently Henry VII) and Richard, standing side by side next to the sundial, embodies the centre's motto of 'Two Kings-One Day', which aims to tell a balanced story of the events of 1485.

In 2005, after years of debate around the actual location of the battlefield, Leicestershire County Council started a multi-disciplinary survey to find the scene of the action. After five years of searching, a number of cannon balls of varying calibres were found over a wide area of low-lying ground over a kilometre southwest of the heritage centre.

As well as the internationally important artillery evidence, small scatterings of other metal objects from the battle were also

found. These included a small, silver gilt badge depicting a Ricardian boar, which was found adjacent to a medieval marsh. This may have been lost during the final struggle between Richard and Henry Tudor.

The rediscovered battlefield covers a large area of private land, across which runs several long guided walks. These include Dadlington, where the slain were buried, and Stoke Golding, where Henry Tudor was crowned after the battle. Shorter guided walks are available every weekend and during the school holidays, and can be booked for group visits.

The hands-on exhibition at the heritage centre places Bosworth in the context of the Wars of the Roses and covers what happened during the battle and its aftermath. One gallery tells how the battlefield was lost and found, displaying objects found in the survey and from the English Civil War, which included a skirmish "on the very field where King Richard was slain".

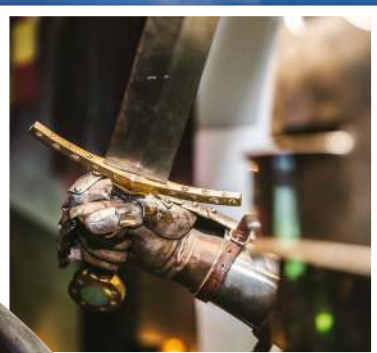
The heritage centre's biggest historical event is the 'Bosworth Medieval Festival' (18 and 19 August 2018, 9.30am – 5.30pm), which includes jousting, artillery displays, living history camps, a medieval market, author talks, fighting demonstrations and the re-enactment of two 'Battles of Bosworth'.

The Sundial Memorial is located on Ambion Hill to commemorate the fallen, and also marks the compass points and distances to other battlefields of the Wars of the Roses



One version shows how Richard might have won the battle, followed by an interactive debate looking at what might have happened next and how today's society may have been different if Richard had been the victor.

The heritage centre's award-winning exhibition includes artefacts from the battlefield, interactive displays and excellent examples of period armour and weapons



Two striking banners representing Richard III and Henry Tudor fly over Richard's camp on Ambion Hill



VISIT WWW.BOSWORTHBATTLEFIELD.ORG.UK FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BUY TICKETS FOR THE FESTIVAL AND OTHER EVENTS

Lord Leycester Hospital

IN THE HISTORIC HEART OF WARWICK THERE IS A REMARKABLE SET OF MEDIEVAL BUILDINGS THAT HAS HOUSED RETIRED SERVICEMEN SINCE 1571

An enduring survivor from the early days of veteran care, Lord Leycester Hospital is a group of medieval timber-framed buildings that largely date from the late 14th century. Located around the Norman gateway into Warwick, the buildings constitute some of the finest examples of medieval courtyard architecture in the UK.

In the late 16th century the complex came under the patronage of Elizabeth I's favourite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who converted it into a retirement home for ex-soldiers.

The hospital still performs that function today. The residents are known as the 'Brethren' and are under the charge of a 'master', who is a retired officer. The hospital is funded by visitor income, and the Brethren often give tours in ceremonial uniform. Highlights include the Chapel of Saint James, which is still lit by candlelight, and the Brethren Kitchen, which has been serving food for 500 years.

Although the hospital is small, its longevity and care for veterans is outstanding. It is also one of the best ways to ensure a truly immersive experience into England's history.

For more information visit: www.lordleycester.com

Right, clockwise from top: Although Warwick is much more famous for its spectacular castle, the beautiful buildings of Lord Leycester Hospital are a smaller gem in the town

Heidi Meyer is the 33rd master of the Lord Leycester Hospital and is also the first female master to be appointed in the Hospital's 450-year history

The Brethren and master of the hospital still wear the ceremonial uniform of a Tudor hat and black gown, and are similar in organisation to the Chelsea Pensioners



'Lest We Forget?'

A MAJOR NEW EXHIBITION ON REMEMBRANCE TO MARK THE END OF WORLD WAR I HAS BEEN OPENED AT IWM NORTH IN GREATER MANCHESTER

From 27 July 2018 – 24 February 2019, IWM North explores how symbols commemorating WWI have endured for 100 years. With over 180 exhibits presented across five themes, 'Lest We Forget?' updates remembrance to the present day. Curator Laura Clouting explains further.

What was the idea behind 'Lest We Forget?'

It has been a century since WWI ended. For Britain, the death toll remains unsurpassed. With bodies left on the fighting fronts, families, communities and the nation had to find novel ways to mourn lost lives. The exhibition

explores how people navigated their way towards the remembrance rituals, many of which are so familiar to us today.

What can visitors expect from the exhibition?

Lest We Forget? opens big questions: what were people remembering in the 1920s? Do we still care about WWI today? It opens with a shocking reminder of death on a vast scale. A compelling variety of personally crafted tributes and memorials join forces with immersive audiovisuals to explore the evolution of remembrance. That includes some sensational loans, which reveal how impactful remembrance through culture has been.

Do you have a favourite exhibit?

I especially love a copy of Sir Frederic Kenyon's 1918 report detailing how British military

cemeteries should be designed. Huge emotion underpins this simple document. Kenyon sought to deal with the acute distress felt by some that their loved ones were never repatriated. Proposed design features were based on a democracy of death, where rank made no difference to individual commemoration.

After 100 years, how should the remembrance of World War I be continued for future generations?

It was never a given that the war dead would be remembered as they have been. Every form of remembrance – by the individual, locality or the state – was the result of active decisions. Today we clearly still want to remember, and to understand, the war. But will it always remain that way? We don't know. Whether it will always remain relevant is an open question.

IWM North is one of five branches of the Imperial War Museums



LEST WE FORGET? RUNS AT IWM NORTH FROM 27 JULY 2018-24 FEBRUARY 2019.
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.IWM.ORG.UK/EVENTS/LEST-WE-FORGET



Lest We Forget? includes ten paintings that were commissioned by the British government in 1918. The most famous is arguably 'Gassed' by John Singer Sargent



REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history releases on the shelf and screen

ARTHUR AND THE KINGS OF BRITAIN

= THE HISTORICAL TRUTH BEHIND THE MYTHS =

THERE'S VERY LITTLE ARTHUR BUT A LOT OF DETAILED HISTORY IN THIS RE-EXAMINATION OF GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH'S HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF BRITAIN

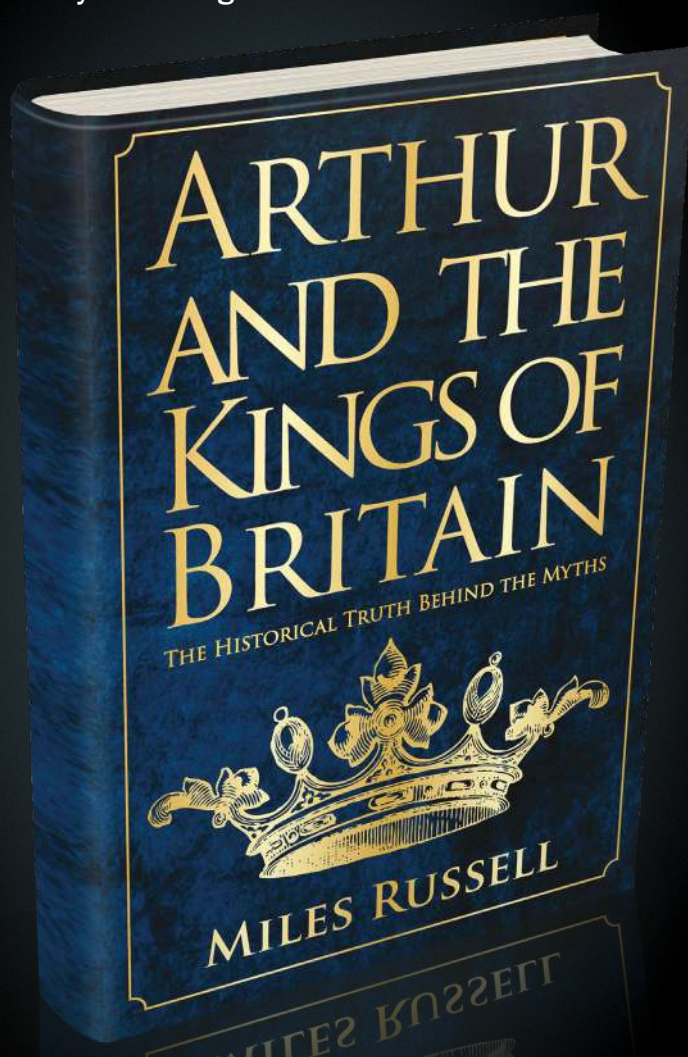
Author: Miles Russell **Publisher:** Amberley Publishing **Price:** £9.99

In this fascinating book, Dr Miles Russell attempts to yoke together the archaeological and historical accounts of Britain from pre-history, through its four centuries' emergence into written history, and its return to legend in the three centuries following the end of Roman rule. To do this, Russell returns to a text that has in recent years been ignored by serious scholars, being seen as a farrago of invention and fantasy: Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (History of the Kings of Britain).

The problem for historians is that, for the two centuries following the end of Roman rule in Britain around 410 CE, there are precisely three contemporary documents: Patrick's *Confessio* and *Epistola ad Coroticum* (probably dating to the second half of the 5th century) and *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain), written in the first half of sixth century by a particularly dolorous monk called Gildas. In the following centuries, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* take up some of the slack, but from this it's clear why the Dark Ages were so-called: there is virtually no record of some of the most important centuries in British history.

So it's no surprise that when, in the 11th century, new Norman rulers found themselves in charge, they asked of their subjects how things had come to be like this. The most complete answer was given, around 1136, by Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose book goes through the kings of Britain from its first king, no less a man than Brutus, the great-grandson of Aeneas, Trojan prince and progenitor of Romulus and Remus, through kings including Lear (of Shakespearean tragedy fame) and Lud (the founder of London), and concluding with Arthur. The *Historia* was taken seriously for centuries, until further scholarship showed that it bore almost no relation to what actually happened during the period it purported to cover.

But given the paucity of sources, Russell argues that it is worth making another, forensic examination of the text to see if it does carry any historical information. He argues that it does, preserving oral tradition from tribal groupings in southern England and king lists from western Britain. By comparing Geoffrey of Monmouth's account with that of the 9th-century *Historia Brittonum* ascribed to Nennius, Russell argues that it is possible to tease out, through the different approaches of each author, something of the original sources. So Nennius is happy to give different accounts of the same reign, sometimes contradictory, but Geoffrey, committed to a linear account of the kings of Britain, either conflates different accounts or moves them to another period entirely in an effort to fill gaps. It's a fascinating and scholarly examination of the evidence, adding in whatever can be gleaned from archaeology and other historical records. Given the



sometimes tenuous links in the chain of argument – the text is full of 'could be' and 'it is just possible' – it's unlikely to win too many scholars to the immediate acceptance of Geoffrey as a historical source, but if it serves to make the *Historia* a subject of serious historical study again, it will have served its purpose.

Oh, and while 'Arthur' appears in the title, he takes up less than 40 pages of the book; Russell concludes that he was a result of Geoffrey and Nennius conflating oral traditions of a war leader called Ambrosius Aurelianus, the only man Gildas has a good word for in his book, with later folktales that had changed the name to Arthur, and then writing Aurelius out of the story.

"IT'S CLEAR WHY THE DARK AGES WERE SO-CALLED: THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO RECORD OF SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CENTURIES IN BRITISH HISTORY"

GAMBLING ON WAR

AN ECONOMIC EXAMINATION OF WORLD WAR I EXPLORES THE MUCH-STUDIED CONFLICT IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT

Author: Roger L. Ransom **Publisher:** Cambridge University Press **Price:** £31.99

Roger L. Ransom's book fills a gap on the groaning shelves of World War I histories, by arguing that these four years of massive bloodshed resulted overwhelmingly from an economic conflict. The author, an economic historian, takes war out of the strictures of the battlefield narrative, focusing instead on the economic abilities of the belligerents to meet the requirements of mobilisation. Often left by the wayside is understanding that taking a country to war has a dramatic impact on a nation's allocation of resources. In the case of the Great War, some countries had to bear serious shortages of supplies and consequently the ability to wage war, mainly as a result of economic blockade.

The economic and territorial expansion of Britain, Germany and Russia in the 19th century, along with a surge in nationalism and the advent of the Industrial Revolution, were key factors in promoting the rivalries that led to war in 1914. This came about, the author maintains, despite the fact that none of the countries involved was prepared for the demands the war would place on their economies in the first months of fighting. The biggest economic blow was obviously the call-up of millions of men, with the commensurate and inevitable depletion this would have on the workforce. "The massive transfer of men into the army [more than 21 million by the beginning of 1915] created an immediate shortage in the

labour force and the shortage increased as time went on," he states.

Another issue every country had to deal with was the impact of the war on the international system of trade that linked the economies of the belligerents and neutral countries. This posed the challenge of replacing imported food supplies needed to feed the armed forces and the civilian population.

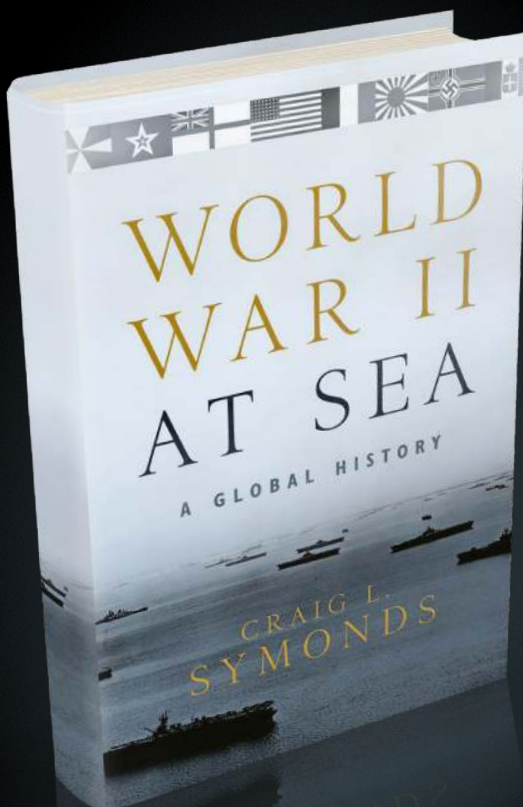
Ransom charts the outlays of the major powers over the war years: expenditures for Britain rose from £200 million to £2.5 billion, France showed an increase from 5 billion to nearly 42 billion francs, while Germany's spending surged from 2.5 billion to 13.1 billion marks. To pay for the sudden shifts in demand created by war, governments needed to raise taxes, which was not a politically feasible solution. Moreover, no one knew how much the war would cost. Printing money brought soaring rates of inflation, which in turn led to panic among consumers, who were unprepared for a world of rapidly rising prices.

Ransom offers an economic snapshot of the war's impact on each economy. Britain endured a less drastic shock than France, Germany, Russia or the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Nonetheless, it is apparent that none of the belligerents had given proper thought to the chaos that would ensue from a prolonged European conflict. The vanquished, as well as the victors, survived the war in one form



or another, but the economic rivalries of the nations that started it remained unresolved.

Ultimately, Ransom shows that the outcome of the war rested as much on the ability of the Allied powers to muster their superior economic resources to continue the fight as it did on success on the battlefield.



WORLD WAR II AT SEA

A GLOBAL HISTORY A BREATHTAKING VOYAGE ACROSS THE WAR-TORN OCEANS OF THE WORLD

Author: Craig L. Symonds **Publisher:** Oxford University Press **Price:** £25

A single volume covering the entirety of World War II at sea is an ambitious undertaking. With books devoted to the individual theatres, campaigns, engagements and even ships of the vast conflict, the task of compressing it all into under 700 pages must have been daunting.

Somehow, Craig L. Symonds has managed to pull off a remarkable feat. Of course, he hasn't really crammed the entire war at sea into one volume – instead he has judiciously chosen the most relevant events to weave a coherent narrative. He has also avoided the trap of making everything seem thinly sketched or brushed over. Yes, there are major campaigns that are dealt with fairly quickly, but there are also in-depth analyses, where Symonds temporarily "zooms in" on a particular

engagement. In fact, the book starts with just about the smallest engagement imaginable – a sneak attack on a British battleship in Scapa Flow by a single U-boat.

Familiar contests then unfold, including the hunting down of the Graf Spee, the destruction of the Bismarck and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Symonds continues to mix the big picture with the intimate close-up and has a knack for drawing parallels, especially when he considers the naval operations to support Malta and Guadalcanal in a single chapter.

Gripping, elegantly written, and managing to surprise even with a story as familiar as this, Symonds's book is nothing short of a triumph. As an introduction to the war at sea during World War II, it is unsurpassed.



HURRICANE

THIS HISTORICAL THRILLER TELLS THE STORY OF THE STORM THAT RAGED OVER ENGLAND IN THE SUMMER OF 1940, AND THE POLISH 'KNIGHTS OF THE AIR' WHO CAME TO DEFEND BRITAIN AGAINST GERMAN INVASION

UK Release Date: 7 September Director: David Blair

If ever there were a group of people whose actions in real life were so genuinely heroic and worthy of their legendary status, it is without a doubt the pilots and crews of the Polish squadrons that fought in the Battle of Britain. Directed by Scottish filmmaker David Blair, *Hurricane* tells their story and their part in the valiant defence against Nazi invasion nearly 80 years ago.

The cast is led by Iwan Rheon (*Game of Thrones*, *Inhumans*), and includes, among others, Milo Gibson (*Hacksaw Ridge*), Stefanie Martini (*Crooked House*, *Prime Suspect 1973*) and Marcin Dorocinski, probably best known to British audiences from *Jack Strong* and *Anthropoid*.

With an adventurer's glint in his eye, Rheon's committed portrayal of legendary fighter pilot ace Jan Zumbach is truly impressive. Usually, when actors play Polish-speaking characters, they say at most a few sentences, but in *Hurricane*, Rheon delivers the majority of his performance in Polish, which is no small feat.

It may be tempting, especially in a review for a history magazine, to pick out factual inaccuracies, but as every filmmaker knows, creating

anything is never without some forms of compromise. No human life or true event smoothly follows the storytelling arch of a film. That said, *Hurricane* would have benefitted from a more accurately detailed focus on individual pilots and their real-life fates. Instead, a few scenes felt unnecessarily constructed, along with some flashback expositions that felt rather blunt.

The film perhaps also lacks some of the poetry in motion and a true sense of the organic fusion between man and machine, where charging at 135-180 metres (450-600 feet) per second at an altitude of 6,000 metres (20,000 feet) created something of a parallel, almost otherworldly existence, as brilliantly described in Arkady Fiedler's classic book *303 Squadron*.

Yet, while in the film's portrayal the Polish pilots may come across as more scruffy than elegant, it does convey more important qualities – their exceptional flying skill and grit. It also shows many of the difficulties they had to overcome in just a few weeks to fly for the RAF. The film also doesn't shy away from the subject of Britain's shameful treatment of its Polish allies as the war ends, and in today's political climate, the film's focus on Polish-British relations feels as important as ever.

Most of the dogfights are well executed, and many scenes in the film are surprisingly gripping, even down to brief moments; a bullet-riddled pilot desperately trying to bale out over open sea, or another pilot falling asleep, exhausted, the very moment his aircraft touches down, safely back on ground.

With a story that has waited a long time to be told on screen, and now comes in time for the 100th anniversary of both the formation of the Polish Air Force and the RAF, *Hurricane* will hopefully reach a wide and much-deserved audience.

Hurricane is released in UK cinemas and on digital platforms 7 September. For more go to hurricanefilm.co.uk

"THE FILM ALSO DOESN'T SHY AWAY FROM THE SUBJECT OF BRITAIN'S SHAMEFUL TREATMENT OF ITS POLISH ALLIES AS THE WAR ENDS, AND IN TODAY'S POLITICAL CLIMATE, THE FILM'S FOCUS ON POLISH-BRITISH RELATIONS FEELS AS IMPORTANT AS EVER"



HADRIAN'S WALL OPERATIONS MANUAL

== FROM CONSTRUCTION TO WORLD HERITAGE SITE ==

A CURIOUS ADDITION TO AN ESTABLISHED AND ENTERTAINING RANGE OF PUBLICATIONS

Author: Simon Forty **Publisher:** Haynes Publishing **Price:** £22.99

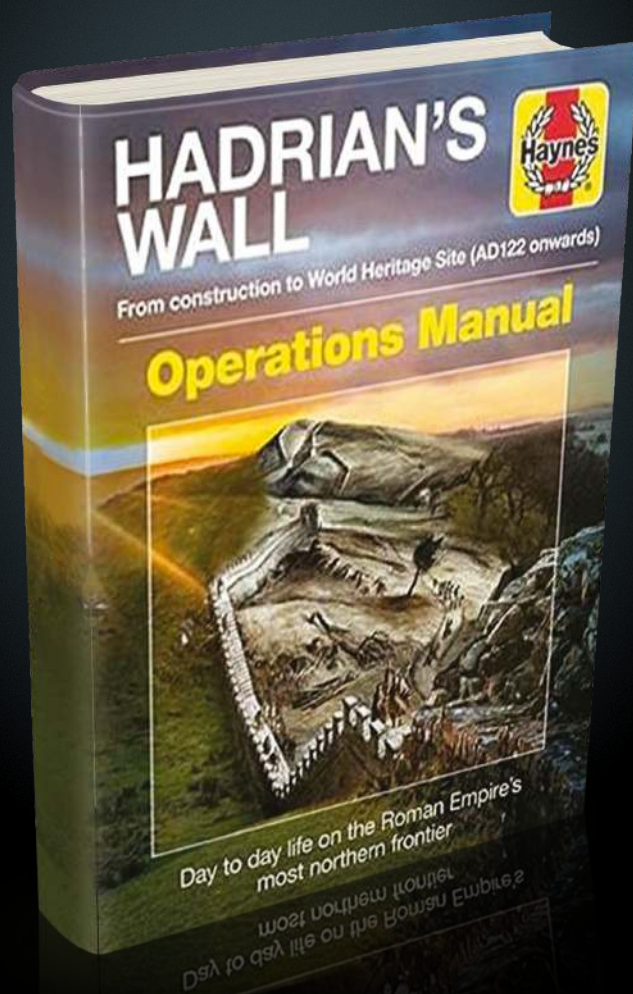
Hadrian's Wall follows in a long line of Haynes titles, which started as genuine owner's manuals for cars such as the Austin Healey and then branched out into subjects as diverse as fighter jets, tanks and nuclear submarines. More recently, the line has entered the world of fictional vehicles, including the publication of a workshop manual for the Millennium Falcon.

The focus on Hadrian's Wall does not seem to sit comfortably within this series, as the cutaway diagrams and in-depth detail on highly technical subjects that are the hallmark of the series are not relevant here. The subject material is undoubtedly worthy of study, and the book is perfectly competent as a guide to the construction and history of the wall, but it fails to entertain like the more fanciful titles in the range.

Nonetheless, the subject is tackled in the meticulous manner which fans of the series are familiar with, including sections of the wall dealt with one by one, accompanied by sweeping aerial photographs. Detailed descriptions of the Roman army and their conquest of Britain bring the book to life, but these are necessarily brief and focus remains on the wall itself.

For a committed enthusiast of Roman history, or someone with a special interest in Hadrian's Wall, this will no doubt be a useful book, but it does not attract the eye or pass the time in the way that other titles in the range have taught us to expect.

"THE SUBJECT IS TACKLED IN THE METICULOUS MANNER WHICH FANS OF THE SERIES ARE FAMILIAR WITH, INCLUDING SECTIONS OF THE WALL DEALT WITH ONE BY ONE, ACCOMPANIED BY SWEEPING AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS"



D-DAY THE SOLDIERS' STORY

AN INTIMATE, OFTEN MOVING STUDY OF THE NORMANDY LANDINGS

Author: Giles Milton **Publisher:** John Murray **Price:** £25

There have been so many books written on the events of 6 June 1944 that it takes something special to stand out. Giles Milton has largely ignored the big picture of the Allied invasion of Normandy to focus almost exclusively on the individual experiences of the men and women involved.

Milton takes a commendably broad definition of 'soldier', including, for instance, the young German woman employed as a wireless operator, as well as the more expected combatants. The story also starts before D-Day itself, covering aspects such as the glider landings that preceded the invasion.

Taking an even-handed approach to the experiences of both sides, Milton crafts a gripping narrative, packed with detail. When the story reaches the familiar beach landings, it is elevated by a poignant observation –

the German machine-gunner watching the landing craft approach the beach is every bit as young, terrified and appalled at what is happening as the American boys he will soon be killing.

There will always be more to learn about an event as massive as the Normandy landings, and Milton's research, mostly drawing on personal testimonies, never fails to engage the reader. In one particularly telling moment, he recounts how the driver of one of the first landing craft to approach 'Dog Green' section of Omaha Beach was forever haunted by the knowledge that every one of the young American men he transported had been killed. "I was in some way responsible for putting them there," Jimmy Green would later say, "I can still see those fresh-faced boys getting out of the boat."

DISCOVER THE STORY OF THE PEOPLE, PLANES AND MISSIONS OF THE RAF

From its genesis in the horrors of the First World War to the infamous Battle of Britain of the Second World War, through to the lifesaving missions carried out in today's trouble zones, this book looks at the men, women and aircraft at the heart of the RAF



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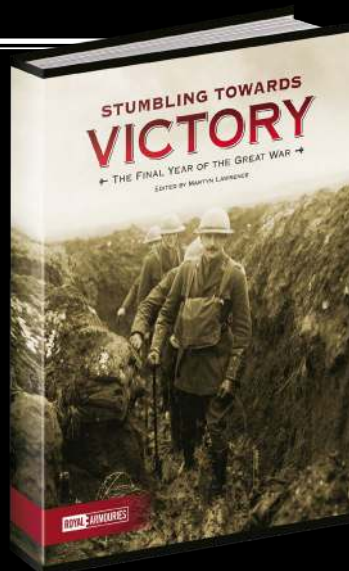
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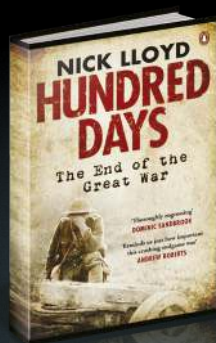
TITLES ABOUT THE OUTBREAK OF WWI ARE COMMON, BUT THOSE DEALING WITH THE LAST DAYS OF THE CONFLICT ARE MUCH THINNER ON THE GROUND

Stumbling Towards Victory: The Final Year Of The Great War *Martyn Lawrence*

Published by the Royal Armouries, this book benefits from that institution's immense collection of artefacts and photographs. This is a generously illustrated book – in fact the emphasis is often on the pictures rather than the words (many of the photographs have never been published before) – but there is authoritative writing here as well. In one telling paragraph, the book explains how Germany was crippled by the naval blockade, making it impossible to replace guns when they were captured by the Allies. The German war effort was thus being slowly strangled, rendering the country increasingly vulnerable to advances in arms technology made by the Allies.



“THIS IS A GENEROUSLY ILLUSTRATED BOOK – IN FACT THE EMPHASIS IS OFTEN ON THE PICTURES RATHER THAN THE WORDS (MANY OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS HAVE NEVER BEEN PUBLISHED BEFORE)”



Hundred Days: The End Of The Great War *Nick Lloyd*

The author's great-uncle was killed in action just weeks before the end of hostilities in 1918. As well as this personal interest in the conflict, Lloyd noticed how few books had been written about the last days of the war, and he set about addressing this gap in the historiography with a well-written account of the Hundred Days Offensive. The book opens with the last German offensive of 1918, where Lloyd explains how the Germans' faith in victory had been replaced by “disillusion and weariness”. The book is strengthened by a generous helping of basic maps.



1918: War And Peace *Gregor Dallas*

Considering the entirety of the last year of the war, Gregor Dallas places the Hundred Days Offensive in the context of preceding and subsequent events, allowing it to exist as more than an isolated phenomenon. The writing is distinctive and often lyrical, and Dallas paints a compelling picture with his words, but he remains aware of the complexity of his task. “There is, in fact, a multitude of memories about how the Great War ended,” he writes, “many of them contradictory”. The book includes a very useful chronology of the events of 1918 and the aftermath of the war.



With Their Bare Hands: General Pershing, The 79th Division, & The Battle For Montfaucon *Gene Fax*

Here the Hundred Days Offensive is told through the eyes of the new kids on the block. Gene Fax's book is a masterpiece of narrative history, focusing on one of the first American divisions to join the war effort and giving an invaluable look into the formation of the American Expeditionary Forces. The training and experiences of the 79th Division make for compelling reading, and the book continually surprises (when it left for France, for instance, half the division had received no training). It's a brilliant look inside the workings of a World War I division.



1918: The Last Act *Barrie Pitt*

Originally published in 1962, Pen & Sword deserves a big vote of thanks for reprinting this book in 2013. Its vintage gives it a particular flavour – that of the 1960s anti-establishment era – and Pitt is highly critical of the generals and their staffs. Modern authors have tended towards a more forgiving appreciation of the immense difficulties involved in running the war, but Pitt's anger at the effects of Britain's class structure burns fiercely (“the officers were separated from the ranks by an impassable social and mental barrier”, he writes). Nevertheless, he still crafts a powerful and insightful narrative of the last stages of the war.

SHOULD FRANCO'S TOMB BE MOVED?

WORDS JULES STEWART

The scars of the Spanish Civil War are still keenly felt today, and the legacy of Francisco Franco's dictatorship remains a bitterly divisive subject

Francisco Franco wasted no time in gloating over his defeat of Spain's Republican forces in April 1939. One month after proclaiming victory, the pudgy, squeaky-voiced generalissimo spelt out his vision for a gargantuan monument to the "Glorious Crusade": "This will not be merely another monument... it will have a basilica, a monastery, a barracks. It will contain the power of Spain, the robustness of the land, the solitude of prayer," he stated in a memorial service for General Emilio Mola, the chief planner of the uprising that led to the Spanish Civil War, and the man who should have commanded the fascist forces, had he not conveniently died in an air crash.

The decision was made public in a decree overflowing with triumphant rhetoric in April 1940: "The heroic sacrifices of our victory and its far-reaching implications for the future of Spain cannot be enshrined in a humble memorial such as those erected in towns and villages." This was to be a colossal exercise in self-aggrandisement from which, needless to say, the vanquished were excluded. The Valle de los Caídos, or Valley of the Fallen, would be the final resting place for Nationalist soldiers who fell in the 'crusade'. Those of the other side were laid to rest in family plots or, in many thousands of cases, in mass unmarked graves.

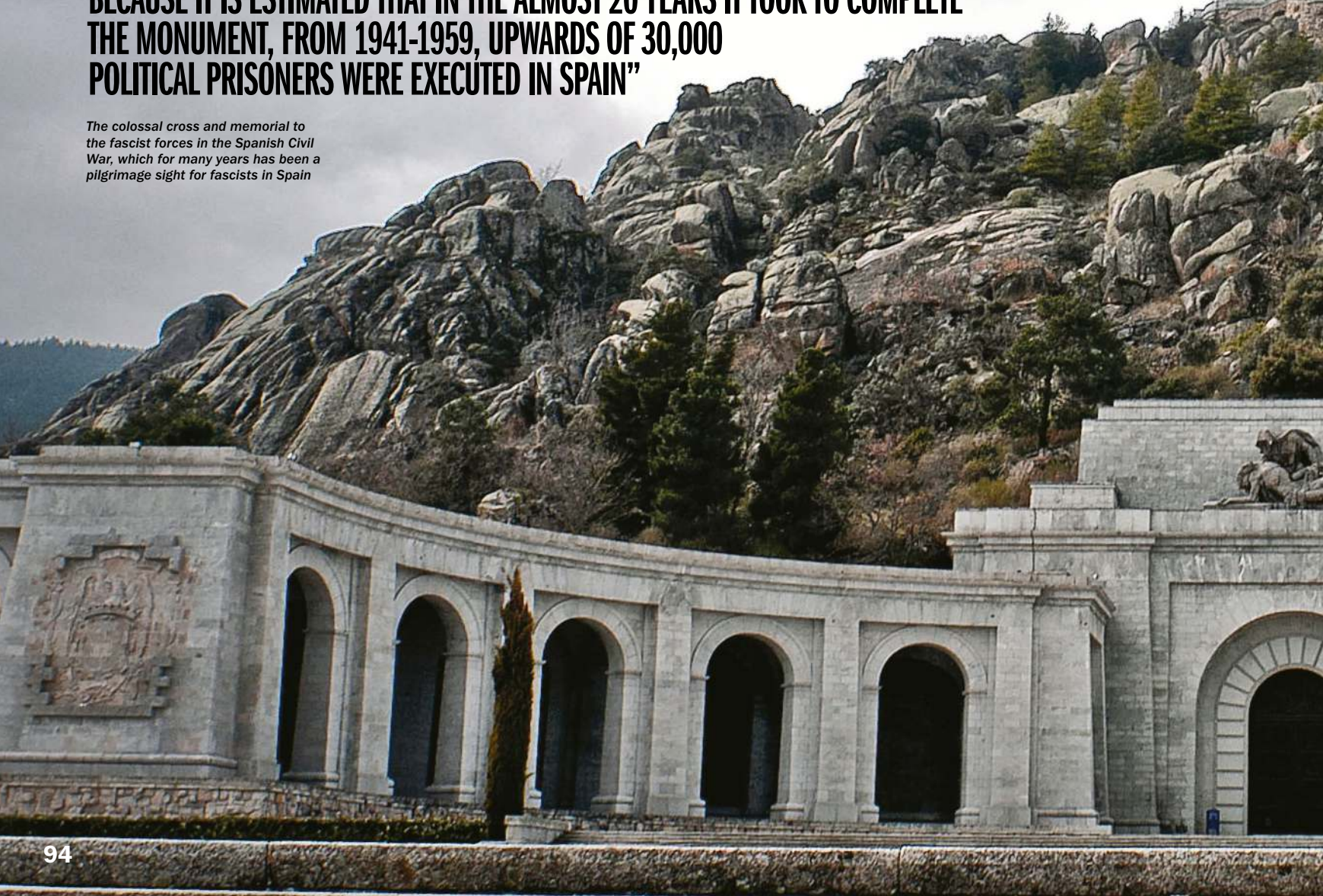
On the other hand, there was a place for surviving former Republican combatants, who

were allowed to work on the construction of this tribute to their victors. But there was to be no reconciliation. Franco stated this clearly when he rejected any form of "liberal, suicidal amnesties, which are more a swindle than a pardon". As an alternative, the caudillo offered a remission of sentences, requiring of his former foes only "repentance and penitence".

An army of some 20,000 workers was employed in excavating and building the Valley of the Fallen. Those who chose to join the work gangs were the fortunate ones, because it is estimated that in the almost 20 years it took to complete the monument, from 1941-1959, upwards of 30,000 political prisoners were executed in Spain.

"THOSE WHO CHOSE TO JOIN THE WORK GANGS WERE THE FORTUNATE ONES, BECAUSE IT IS ESTIMATED THAT IN THE ALMOST 20 YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE THE MONUMENT, FROM 1941-1959, UPWARDS OF 30,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE EXECUTED IN SPAIN"

The colossal cross and memorial to the fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War, which for many years has been a pilgrimage sight for fascists in Spain



The Valley of the Fallen, high in the foothills of the Guadarrama mountains a short drive north of Madrid, is the largest war memorial in the world. Historian Jeremy Treglown's description of this monstrous shrine portrayed it as something Mussolini could have ordered over the telephone. "At its highest point rises a 500-foot (150-metre) tall stone cross. Beneath the cross on one side is a windswept area, something between a plaza and a parade ground, flanked by a Benedictine monastery, a choir school, and a now little-used building that originally housed a Francoist school of social science. On the pinnacle's other side sprawls a vast esplanade giving views over miles of surrounding countryside, much of it now a national park. The two areas are joined by an underground cathedral tunnelled into the mountain: the Basilica of the Holy Cross of the Valley of the Fallen."

Spain's new Socialist government has embarked on a bold initiative to erase this last major vestige of the country's near-40-year dictatorship. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has announced his intention to remove Franco's remains from the crypt in which he was interred after the caudillo's death in November 1975. There are fears from some that the decision will open old wounds in a society still coming to terms with a bloody civil war and its aftermath.

On the other hand, a population enjoying their freedom and high standard of living could react to returning the dictator's body to his family with overwhelming indifference.

For many years after Franco's death the crypt attracted crowds of jack-booted Falangists in blue uniform, who marched all night on a 48-kilometre (30-mile) pilgrimage to the mausoleum on the anniversary of Franco's demise. They came to honour the dictator, and celebrated a full sung requiem Mass for his memory. An encouraging litmus test of Franco's scant popularity is the near nonexistence today of this Hitlerian pageant.

The previous Socialist government, led by José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero from 2004-2007, enacted the Law of Historical Memory, which among other things prohibits "acts of a political character and celebration of the civil war, its leaders and Francoism". The conservative Popular Party under Mariano Rajoy, which replaced the Socialists in 2007, vetoed the motion to remove Franco's body on the grounds of cost and what they feared was a danger of provoking confrontation. Interestingly, Prime Minister Sánchez, who took over when Rajoy resigned in a vote of no confidence in June, is prepared to leave the other high-profile figure of the civil war lying in the mausoleum. This is José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the founder of

the Falange, who was executed by the Republic in 1936. Sánchez argues that Primo de Rivera, albeit a fascist, was a victim of the war.

Sánchez, who heads a minority government, will almost certainly be able to galvanise the votes he needs from regional nationalist and left-wing parties to push through his proposal. There is speculation in the Spanish press regarding the wisdom of stirring up hostility over the dictator's bones. It is reminiscent of the tense immediate post-Franco years, when the dismantlement of the regime's legal and moral apparatus raised fears that Francoist elements in the military would come out to restore the old order. They never moved a finger.

The closest Spain came to the brink was in February 1981, when the Guardia Civil's Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Tejero, along with 150 of his men, burst Buster Keaton-fashion into parliament to declare a coup. The sticky problem was that no one had an idea of who or what was to replace the government, or even who was in charge of the attempted military takeover. The affair ended 24 hours later when Tejero surrendered in confusion and dismay, and ended up spending the next 15 years in prison. Life in Spain carried on as normal – the very outcome Pedro Sánchez is banking on when Franco is finally removed from his hilltop resting place.

Jules Stewart is a journalist, writer and translator, with published books on historical subjects including *Madrid: The History*, *Gotham Rising: New York In The 1930s* and *The Kaiser's Mission To Kabul*.



Image: Alamy

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BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE'S TARGE

This elaborate shield accompanied the 'Young Pretender' during the daring and bloody Jacobite uprising

The Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 was the last serious military uprising on mainland Britain. It was also the final attempt to restore the Stuart dynasty to the British throne against the ruling Hanoverians under George II.

Prince Charles Edward Stuart landed in Scotland with a handful of followers but raised a standard of rebellion and gathered thousands of supporters. Edinburgh was captured and Charles inflicted a humiliating defeat against British government troops at the Battle of Prestonpans. He then invaded England and marched to Derby before retreating, and was eventually defeated at the famous Battle of Culloden in 1746.

'Bonnie Prince Charlie' was a poor military commander who nevertheless became a legendary figure. This was partly because he cultivated a romantic warrior identity that included highly stylised weapons such as this elaborate shield.

A 'targe' is a traditional round shield made out of wooden boards and covered in pigskin. This pictured example was gifted to Charles in Rome by James Drummond, Duke of Perth in 1740 as part of a gift of Highland clothes and accessories. The targe is covered in symbolic decorations, including swords, drums and trumpets, as well as Scottish thistles and bonnets. The central boss is a striking Medusa head, and the cap badges of the bonnets include Perth's crest and the badge of Saint Andrew.

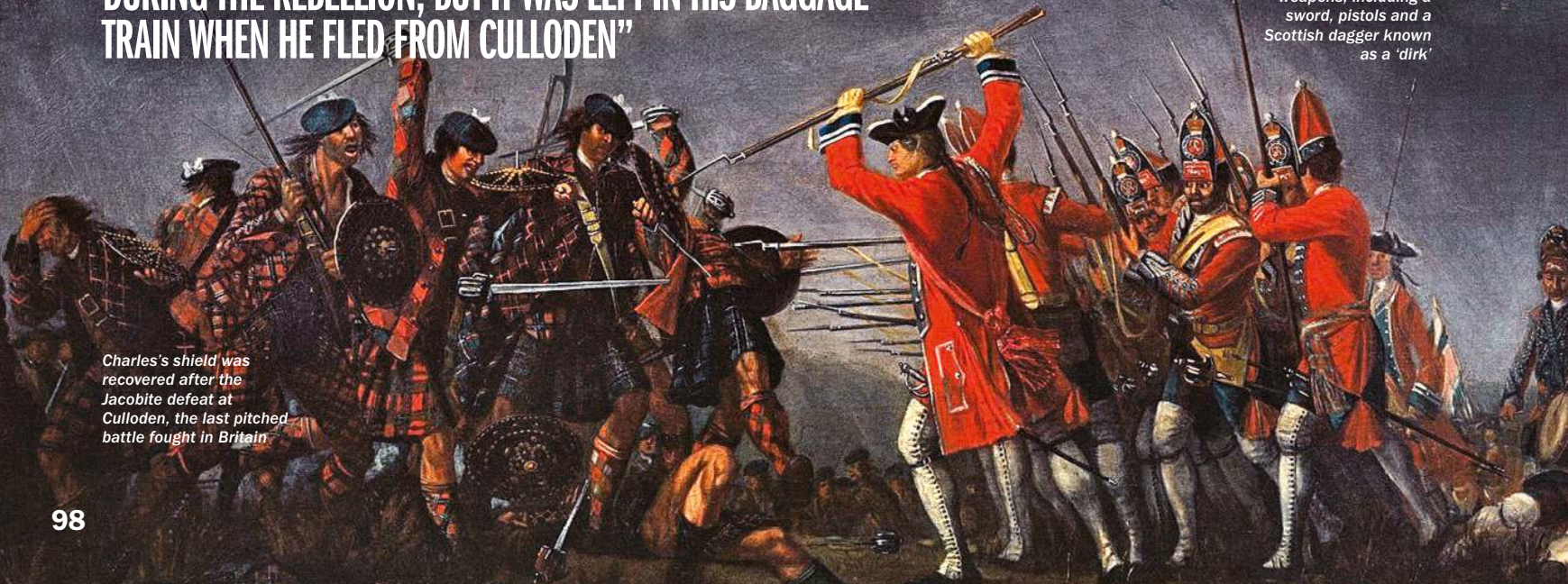
Charles's shield accompanied him on campaign during the rebellion, but it was left in his baggage train when he fled from Culloden. It is generally supposed that the targe was rescued from plunderers by the Jacobite clan chieftain Ewan MacPherson of Cluny.

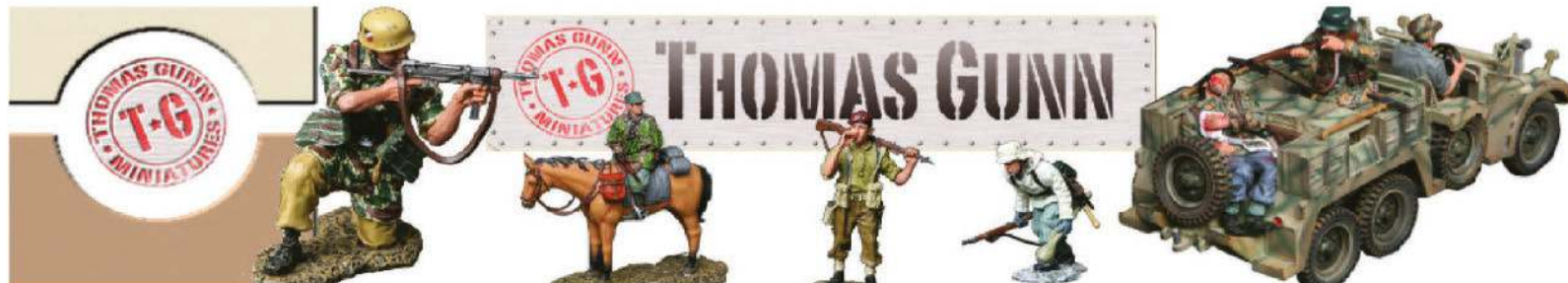
"CHARLES'S SHIELD ACCOMPANIED HIM ON CAMPAIGN DURING THE REBELLION, BUT IT WAS LEFT IN HIS BAGGAGE TRAIN WHEN HE FLED FROM CULLODEN"



The Duke of Perth gifted this shield to Bonnie Prince Charlie with other weapons, including a sword, pistols and a Scottish dagger known as a 'dirk'

Charles's shield was recovered after the Jacobite defeat at Culloden, the last pitched battle fought in Britain





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